

6-2015

## tacHOMEa: Infill Tools for a Happy City

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### Recommended Citation

Mathez, Anaïs; Cynkar, Michael; Silver, Hannah; and Kobel, Nicholas, "tacHOMEa: Infill Tools for a Happy City" (2015). *Master of Urban and Regional Planning Workshop Projects*. Paper 125.  
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tacHOMEa

INFILL TOOLS FOR A HAPPY CITY

**Prepared for: Planning and Development Services, City of Tacoma, Washington**

Prepared by: Michael Cynkar, Nicholas Kobel, Anaïs Mathez, Hannah Silver

Portland State University Planning Workshop

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Report submitted June 8, 2015

## **ACKNOWLEDGMENTS**

The tacHOMEa team wishes to acknowledge those who have helped make this project possible.

Thank you to Portland State University faculty members and instructors Sy Adler, Marisa Zapata, Lisa Bates and Susan Hartnett for providing their mentorship, suggestions and encouragement. Bill Sager, Bill Cunningham, Eli Spevak, Bradley Killian and Elizabeth Leontine provided invaluable expert advice related to topics of home building, urban design and community development that had a crucial impact on this project. We greatly appreciate all survey and walking tour participants for their willingness to share their time and insight into their communities. We offer our gratitude to the City of Portland Bureau of Planning and Sustainability for allowing us to use their visual preference survey instrument and images in this report. Additionally, the analyses in this document would not have been possible without open data provided by Pierce County Assessor-Treasurer. We commend their commitment to maintaining these publicly available datasets. Thanks to Bob Cynkar and Dr. David Silver for their close review of our report. Last, the entire Planning and Development Services staff at the City of Tacoma has been incredibly supportive of our team throughout this process. Special thanks to Stephen Atkinson and Elliott Barnett for their guidance on this project, as well as their passion and vision for the future of Tacoma.



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The **tacHOMEa** team was formed to consult the City of Tacoma's Planning and Development department. This client-consultant relationship was built through the Planning Workshop at Portland State University's Master of Urban and Regional Planning program. Engagement in the Planning Workshop is a requirement for students' completion of the degree.

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The City of Tacoma has policies that both encourage the densification of neighborhoods through a broadened range of residential infill options and also protect the character of single-family housing patterns. However, recent residential development has illustrated the difficulty of achieving goals of compatibility and density simultaneously. How can development incorporate better design standards and placemaking practices that respond to a neighborhood's unique character, while diversifying the housing stock to provide a greater variety of housing options?

Relating to the city's anticipated population growth, as well as regional environmental and economic pressures, this report frames the discussion, analysis and recommendations around two key objectives: increasing access to "missing middle" housing, and promoting context-sensitive development.

This report covers an introduction to the project's objectives and methodology, an overview of existing conditions, a study of urban form pattern areas, takeaways from community engagement efforts and final recommendations.

The information from this report helps establish a framework for guiding residential infill development in a manner that is sensitive to both neighborhood design and the diversifying needs of Tacoma's current and future residents. The study of pattern areas is a tool that provides an analytical framework for guiding future work towards the incorporation of place-based needs and desires informed by the community. Recommendations identify actions that are both city-wide as well as pattern-specific, making a statement about the direction of growth and residential development as a means to frame the opportunities that exist in Tacoma.



# FOREWORD

Three key elements serve as the impetus for this study.

## **STATE-MANDATED REVIEW**

The City of Tacoma is required under the Washington Growth Management Act of 1990 (GMA) to periodically update its comprehensive plan to incorporate regional population projections and other long-range planning efforts. This project is being done in concert with the 2015 update to support the Housing Element and other relevant chapters. The Housing Element is a mandatory requirement under the GMA and requires that cities plan for a variety of types of housing that provide attainable options for residents of all means.

## **COMMUNITY CONCERNS**

Residents of Tacoma are concerned about trends of development in their city. These concerns involve new development that does not fit in with existing residential development patterns or does not meet community needs for affordability, well-maintained housing, or the provision of a variety of housing options.

## **GAPS IN INFORMATION**

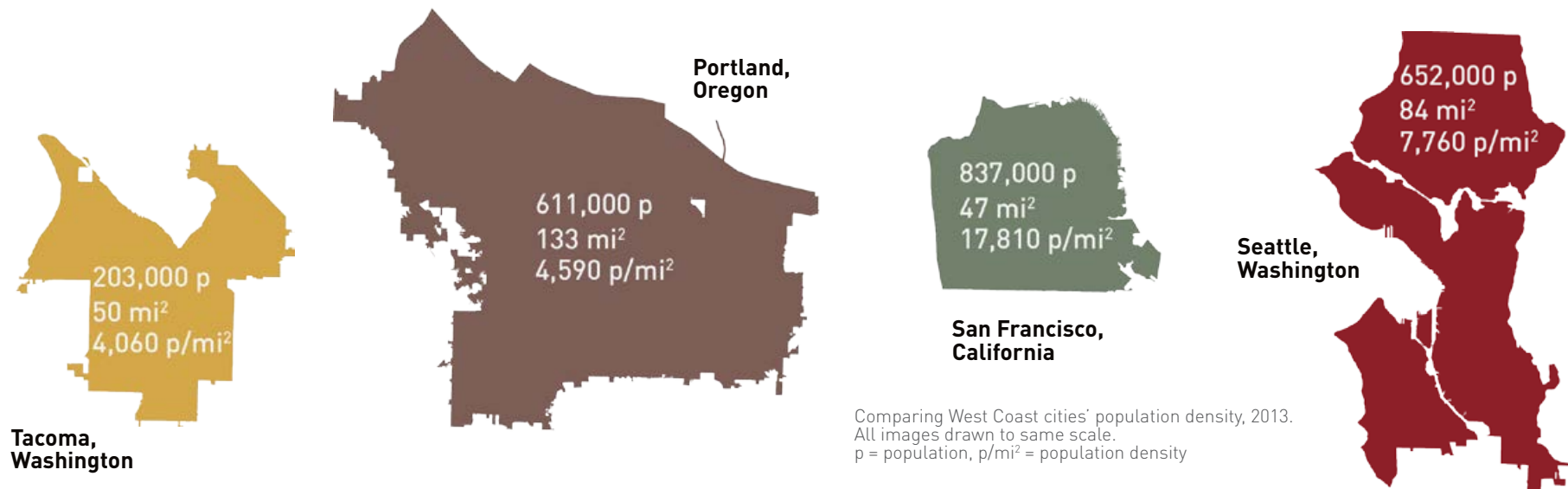
The City of Tacoma's Planning and Development Services (PDS) department saw the identification of neighborhood design patterns within Tacoma as an important need to inform growth management policy and promote development that was consistent with neighborhood character. PDS submitted a proposal to Portland State University's Master of Urban and Regional Planning program to conduct this analysis to help inform the Housing Element.



A photograph of a row of colorful Victorian houses on a hill. The houses are in various colors including red, yellow, and blue. A blue truck is parked on the street in front of the houses. The sky is blue with some clouds. The entire image is framed by a dashed orange border.

CHAPTER 1

# A CHANGING CITY



**T**acoma is a city of neighborhoods. These neighborhoods have distinct natural and built environment features that make them unique urban places. Each of these neighborhoods have an instrumental role to play in the collective need to accommodate future growth in the city. Current policies encourage the densification of neighborhoods to manage growth while other policies mandate the protection of the character of single-family residential areas. Some recent residential development in the city has caused backlash from community members and illustrates the difficulty of achieving the goals of density and compatibility simultaneously. The challenge ahead for the City of Tacoma is to meet the needs of its current and future residents in a way that recognizes evolving trends while still preserving the important qualities that lead to unique and cherished neighborhood character.

**This chapter introduces the challenges that Tacoma faces, explains the objectives and methodology of the tacHOMEa project and illustrates how larger societal changes are relevant to housing issues in Tacoma.**

**This chapter also includes a glossary of key terms and a preliminary exploration of what makes a great urban neighborhood.**

The core of Tacoma's challenge is how to accommodate a larger future population as the region continues to grow. As the City of Tacoma updates its Comprehensive Plan, it must plan based on population projections from the Puget Sound Regional Council which indicate that as many as 127,000 new residents will live in Tacoma by 2040, resulting in the need for up to 47,000 new housing units.<sup>1</sup> These growth projections include residents who are expected to move to Tacoma from other cities, as well as the growing families of existing Tacoma residents. The City has planned for high-density growth in major centers and along transportation corridors, but less so in existing single-family residential neighborhoods that cover the majority of Tacoma.

One growth management strategy for residential neighborhoods focuses on the "missing middle." Middle housing has higher densities than single-family homes but lower densities than



large multi-family developments.<sup>2</sup> These types of middle housing options—duplexes, triplexes, quadplexes, cottage housing and accessory dwelling units, among others—are a means to increase density and provide a diverse range of new housing options across many neighborhoods. These types of housing options promote an urban form that is arguably more compatible with existing residential development patterns than development that is exclusively in centers and corridors. Middle housing options are considered “missing” because zoning regulations have allowed few of these options in the recent past.

It is important to note that merely increasing the supply of residential units will not guarantee that the price of

housing remains affordable for Tacoma residents. While there is the basic supply and demand necessity for increased housing to keep prices affordable, the types of new units being built are of critical importance. In many cases, new residential growth will make particular cities or neighborhoods more desirable and result in higher prices if proactive measures are not in place for affordable housing options.

This report identifies a variety of residential infill development strategies that can help guide housing policy to incorporate better placemaking practices to reflect a neighborhood’s unique character while also meeting the increased demand for housing citywide. The goals of these recommendations are to promote

context-sensitive strategies that increase housing choice and affordability as a means of fostering thriving neighborhoods that meet the diverse needs of Tacoma’s current and future residents.

## PROJECT OVERVIEW

Tacoma’s housing policies aim to accomplish numerous goals, but a common underlying aspiration of each goal is to create “great urban neighborhoods.” This approach recognizes that cities are comprised of a variety of neighborhoods with distinct qualities and housing policy should enhance what gives these neighborhoods their urban character. The notion of what it means to be “urban” or a “neighborhood” has changed



## THE CONNECTION BETWEEN PLACE AND AFFORDABILITY:

INTERVIEW WITH LISA BATES,  
PHD—PORTLAND STATE UNIVERSITY,  
SCHOOL OF URBAN STUDIES FACULTY<sup>3</sup>

Professor Lisa Bates argued that it was important to view the project concepts of density, diversity and compatibility through a place-based lens, especially for low-income residents. While the construction of affordable housing units at a higher density helps accomplish certain goals, it is critical that housing be built where it is most needed. This allows vulnerable populations to stay in their neighborhood amid rising costs and helps prevent displacement.

This place-based focus led to more discussion about one of our key terms: compatibility. While the term is often narrowly defined to reflect visual compatibility—such as architectural features—Bates emphasized that it is important to think about whether new construction is socially and culturally compatible as well. For example, new housing that matched the existing housing stock in appearance but was out of the price range of existing neighborhood residents would not be truly compatible. The conversation with Professor Bates reinforced the importance of addressing issues of housing density, affordability and compatibility in a proactive manner to best meet the future needs of the community.

considerably over time, meaning that the needs of neighborhoods have also changed. Housing policy must balance changing needs while also preserving the qualities that make these neighborhoods unique and special places.

## OBJECTIVES

In order to meet these goals, our approach examines Tacoma's housing policy through two lenses:

- » **increasing access to middle housing** and
- » **promoting context-sensitive development.**

### WHY MIDDLE HOUSING?

Zoning regulations have allowed limited housing options of low-density single-family houses or high-density development in limited areas. There is a wide range of underutilized middle housing options that could lead to more housing choice for residents.

### WHY CONTEXT-SENSITIVE DEVELOPMENT?

Building upon the defining characteristics of neighborhoods is essential for meeting their unique needs. This suggests the need for residential development that not only has similar visual features, but fits broader economic, social and environmental needs of residents.

## APPROACH

We use the following three steps to outline our study and accomplish project objectives.

### IDENTIFY PATTERNS IN THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

Key physical characteristics such as street grids, presence of alleyways and density of housing units provide key information about what types of housing would fit in best with existing development.

### UNDERSTAND THE QUALITIES THAT GIVE THESE PATTERNS A SENSE OF PLACE

Key characteristics that community members identify will help inform location-specific needs.

### PROVIDE RECOMMENDATIONS

Our final recommendations take into consideration existing features of the built environment and the input of community members to provide recommendations that are founded in unique characteristics.

## STRUCTURE

This report is organized into several sections that build upon each other.

### SNAPSHOT OF TACOMA

This chapter identifies the underlying necessity for changes to current

## WHAT MAKES A GREAT URBAN NEIGHBORHOOD? <sup>6</sup>

There are many qualities that can define a great urban neighborhood. To help frame the discussion to be specific to Tacoma's needs, we return to our two main objectives of **increasing middle housing** and **promoting context-sensitive development**.

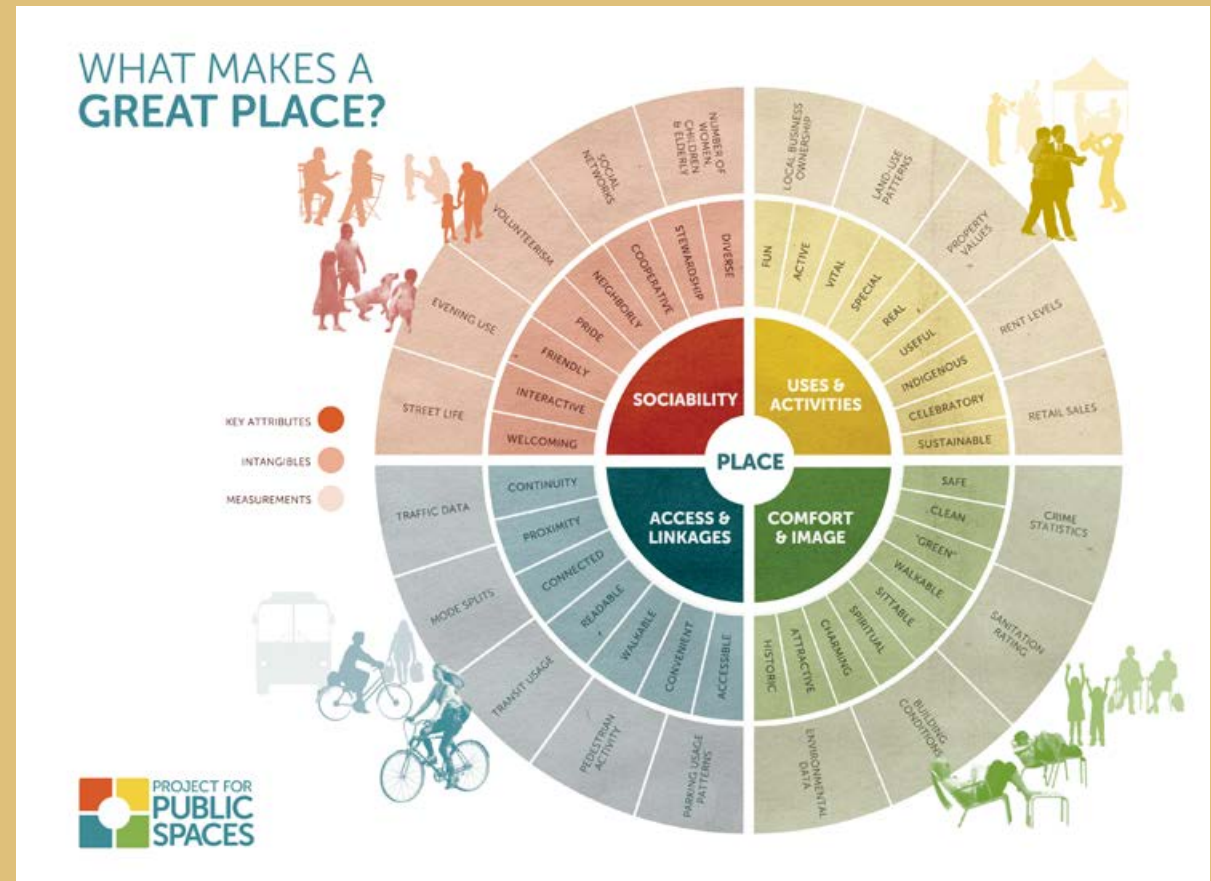
Increasing middle housing leads to increases in density without large increases in building bulk. Research highlights the importance of density through the greater accessibility to services and transit options that it provides, as well as the opportunity for an aging population to "age in place" in a more walkable, safe environment.<sup>4</sup>

Promoting contextually sensitive development also helps reflect important characteristics of neighborhoods that make them special and unique places for their residents.<sup>5</sup> The importance of encouraging context sensitivity lies not only in the narrow sense of aesthetic compatibility of new development as it is often interpreted, but also as a way to think of sensitivity and compatibility with social and economic needs.

Communities that support varied housing options and maintain affordability for residents of a variety of income levels make aging in place more feasible. These are some examples of how neighborhoods can be compatible with social needs. The purpose of identifying key qualities of successful urban neighborhoods is not necessarily to pick which set of characteristics is best, but rather, to explore how a variety of strategies can be used in context-sensitive ways to help accomplish broader economic, social and

environmental goals. Given the pressures that communities face, the most successful urban neighborhoods will adapt to become resilient to these threats while maintaining the important qualities that make them unique and are important to their residents. The solution lies in a combination of tangible changes to the built environment and greater understanding of broader community needs. At the intersection of these forces are policies that govern how we make decisions

about which investments to make, who we must serve, what services to provide and how and where neighborhoods grow. A nuanced city policy helps reflect the diverse challenges that different communities in Tacoma face and the best ways that they can adapt and deal with broader challenges.





## KEY TERMS

- **Infill development:** Infill refers to new development on vacant, bypassed and underutilized land within built-up areas of existing communities, where infrastructure is already in place. Infill also includes redevelopment of lots in these areas. The following examples illustrate the wide range of potential infill scenarios:
  - Two-acre brownfield re-development site
  - single commercial parcel made vacant after a fire on Main Street
  - one or two lots in an urban or sub-urban residential neighborhood
- **Context-sensitivity:** A holistic approach towards residential development that analyzes the compatibility of new development through aesthetic qualities as well as related economic, social and environmental criteria.
- **Middle housing:** Housing options that have higher unit densities than single-family detached homes but lower unit densities than typical apartment or condominium buildings. This may be referred to as the “missing middle” due to its disappearance in America since WWII.
- **Population density:** The number of people living in a geographic area, often per acre or square mile.
- **Housing unit density:** The number of housing units within a geographic area, often per acre or square mile. A duplex is one structure, but contains two units.
- **Housing affordability:** The existence of a variety of housing types that are attainable to residents. We do not use this term to describe “affordable housing” as it is traditionally conceived (i.e. subsidized units or public housing projects).
- **Built environment:** Human-made infrastructure, such as buildings, roads and sidewalks.
- **Natural environment:** Non-built features of a city or surrounding environment. Examples include parks, rivers, lakes, trees and gardens.
- **Housing choice:** The ability of people in all economic segments of society to access high-quality housing across a variety of neighborhoods and housing types. Housing choice is critical to encourage integration of neighborhoods and address historic issues of racial segregation and housing discrimination.

policies and how Tacoma’s housing issues fit within a broader economic, social and environmental context.

### RESIDENTIAL PATTERN AREAS

This chapter provides an examination of the current patterns of residential development that contribute to Tacoma’s diverse landscape of unique neighborhoods.

### COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

This chapter illustrates results from our outreach efforts that reflect the opinions of Tacoma’s residents.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter suggests strategies for residential infill development that meet the broad policy goals from the introduction, the context-specific conditions from the snapshot and pattern area sections, and the input from the community engagement section.

### VISION

This chapter identifies the impact that the implementation of recommendations could have on Tacoma’s future.

## CONTEXT AND TRENDS

The City of Tacoma is experiencing rapid changes. Like many other communities in the United States and throughout the world, Tacoma must tackle a variety of economic, social and environmental trends that present challenges for the future. Some examples include climate change, population growth, regional economic structure, public health concerns, and social equity and justice. While these challenges ultimately need holistic solutions, housing

provides a key lens for targeted action on each of these broader issues.

## **NEIGHBORHOOD CHANGE OVER TIME: THE “AMERICAN DREAM” AND BEYOND**

Since its incorporation in 1875, Tacoma has seen residential development patterns that are similar to other urban areas in the United States. Early development was focused in compact neighborhoods that were pedestrian-friendly, and over time expanded outwards along streetcar corridors. The proliferation of automobile ownership in the 1950s led to increased mobility and the unprecedented opportunity to live in a suburban residential neighborhood. This type of development pattern became synonymous with the “American Dream,” where every family owned a house with a private yard and a car. These newfound opportunities led to corresponding negative views of rental properties, density and transit, which resulted in widespread urban sprawl and the fragmentation of many urban communities.

Recent trends show an increasing redefinition of this American Dream due to changing generational preferences and also pressing concerns at a regional, national and global level. The City of Tacoma needs to play a leading role to promote

housing options and development patterns that are environmentally, socially and economically sustainable to mitigate the aspects of current development that do not reflect these critical needs.

### **SOCIAL TRENDS**

As the baby boomers (those born in the years following WWII) age and younger millennials (those reaching adolescence around the year 2000) increasingly want to forego automobiles and live in walkable, transit-accessible urban neighborhoods, the vision of an ideal residential neighborhood is evolving. Nearly 20% of the American population are baby boomers, many of whom are seeking smaller housing options in more walkable communities. Further, 77% of millennials indicate a preference for living in walkable communities.<sup>7</sup>

### **ECONOMIC TRENDS**

Employment projections for Tacoma call for the city to accommodate up to 97,000 additional jobs by 2040.<sup>8</sup> Currently, 74% of employed workers in Tacoma live outside of the city limits. This compares with 63% in Seattle, 59% in Portland and 58% in Spokane.<sup>9</sup> With high numbers of employees already commuting into Tacoma for work, the city needs additional housing to capitalize on existing economic growth in the region and also to encourage growth in the future.

## **PROPOSED HOUSING ELEMENT GOALS FOR TACOMA’S 2015 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE**

### **GOAL H-1: HOUSING DIVERSITY**

Tacomans have access to high-quality housing that accommodates their needs, preferences, and financial capabilities in terms of different types, tenures, density, sizes, costs, and locations.

### **GOAL H-2: EQUITABLE ACCESS TO HOUSING**

Tacoma ensures equitable access to housing, making a special effort to remove disparities in housing access for people of color, low-income households, diverse household types, older adults, and households that include people with disabilities.

### **GOAL H-3: HEALTHY CONNECTED CITY**

Tacomans live in safe, healthy housing that provides convenient access to jobs and to goods and services that meet daily needs. This housing is connected to the rest of the city and region by safe, convenient, affordable, multimodal transportation.

### **GOAL H-4: AFFORDABLE HOUSING**

Tacoma has an adequate supply of affordable housing units to meet the needs of residents vulnerable to increasing housing costs.

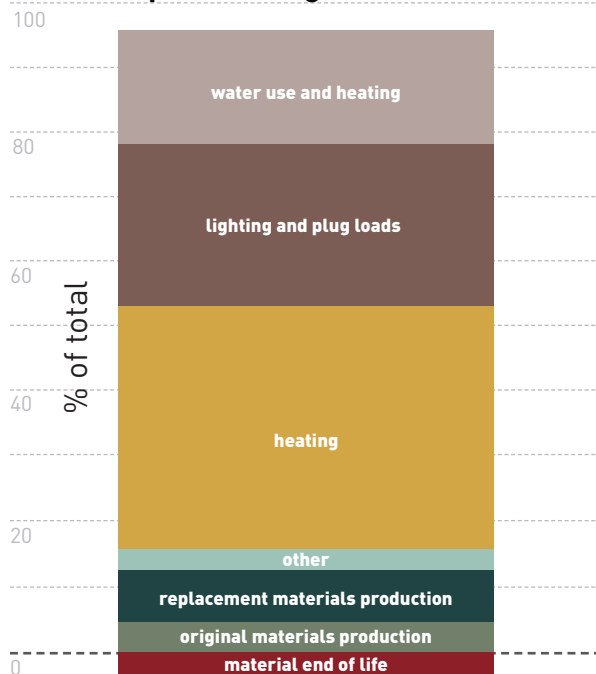
### **GOAL H-5: HIGH-PERFORMANCE HOUSING**

Tacoma residents have access to resource efficient and high performance housing that is well integrated with its surroundings, for people of all abilities and income levels.

### How house sizes have changed in almost 60 years in the United States<sup>11</sup>

	1950	2008
<b>HOME SIZE</b>	983 ft <sup>2</sup>	2500 ft <sup>2</sup>
<b>HOUSEHOLD SIZE</b>	3.8	2.6
<b>SIZE PER PERSON</b>	259 ft <sup>2</sup>	962 ft <sup>2</sup>

### Lifecycle greenhouse gas (GHG) impacts for a house over 70 years (kgCO<sub>2</sub>e), proportional to square footage of home<sup>11</sup>



### ENVIRONMENTAL TRENDS

Communities throughout the United States and the world are also facing increased pressure from population growth, resource scarcity and climate change. As a result of more extreme weather patterns, the Puget Sound region is expected to face challenges with rising sea levels, landslides, coastal erosion and habitat loss, threats to the salmon population, drought, forest fires, air pollution, public health impacts, pest infections and food chain damage.<sup>10</sup> The sprawling, carbon-intensive residential land use patterns of the latter half of the 20th century are largely unsustainable in the midst of such pressures.

### ACCOMMODATING SOCIAL TRENDS

To adjust to changing needs and preferences among residents and encourage more walkable, transit-accessible communities, there needs to be access to nearby services and amenities and increased levels of residential density to support those facilities. Since many neighborhoods in Tacoma were built on low-density residential lots, residential infill development offers an opportunity to encourage moderate increases to residential density in these communities.

### ACCOMMODATING ECONOMIC TRENDS

Without housing policies that promote the type of urban residential development that younger generations favor, Tacoma will not be able to realize its employment potential. Residential infill development can help provide a larger variety of housing options in urban neighborhoods that offer closer proximity to employment opportunities and allow the City of Tacoma to capitalize on the region's economic growth. Furthermore, residential infill development can be more cost-effective for cities since it can utilize existing infrastructure rather than require the construction of new infrastructure.

### ACCOMMODATING ENVIRONMENTAL TRENDS

The promotion of compact, walkable neighborhoods is also a key strategy for addressing larger economic, social, and environmental issues. These types of communities are less dependent on fossil fuel resources for transportation and utilities, which result in neighborhoods that are more resilient and stable in the face of an uncertain future. The Puget Sound Regional Council estimates that targeting growth in larger cities and urban areas can result in a 9% decrease in the region's greenhouse gas emissions.<sup>12</sup>

## **CAPITALIZING ON TRENDS: ROADMAP TO TACOMA'S FUTURE**

Tacoma's zoning code must evolve to meet the city's housing goals, address broad concerns and changing neighborhood preferences. Residential development patterns and neighborhood character in Tacoma are largely a product of zoning, which is outlined in Chapter 3. Zoning resulted in a standardization of residential development and the separation of land uses for future development. The current uniform zoning approach has limited the flexibility to creatively develop in these pre-zoning neighborhoods. It has hindered the promotion of great urban neighborhoods and the expansion of middle housing in large swaths of Tacoma. Zoning policy has had a significant impact on the physical development patterns of Tacoma and highlights the need for an approach that is sensitive to the differences that exist between neighborhoods.

While this report generally seeks to move away from one-size-fits-all zoning policies, some of our recommendations are blanket recommendations to implement across the city. The rationale behind these types of recommendations is that the expansion of middle housing is an objective in itself, and the best means for increasing these housing options is often to allow them on a broader scale. Given the projected population growth

in the region and economic, social, and environmental pressures, neighborhoods in Tacoma will change. These types of changes have happened in the past and will continue to happen in the future. The City of Tacoma has the opportunity to change in a way that enhances, rather than detracts from, cherished local qualities. Planning for these circumstances allows Tacoma to be proactive—rather than reactive—and to better manage growth in a way that fits the needs of its current and future residents. By identifying the distinct qualities that make neighborhoods special, Tacoma has the opportunity to align with community values and learn from past successes and failures.

Tacoma has the opportunity to expand housing options in a way that reflects changing values about what makes a great urban neighborhood by increasing middle housing options and promoting context-sensitive development.

Expanding middle housing options helps achieve city goals of increases in density. Doing so in a contextually sensitive way allows this development to respond to existing characteristics of neighborhoods to meet a diverse variety of neighborhood needs.

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An aerial photograph of Tacoma, Washington, showing a dense industrial area with various buildings and a large bridge in the background. The image is framed by a dashed line border.

## CHAPTER 2

# SNAPSHOT OF TACOMA

Nº 24 WATERFRONT, TACOMA, WASHINGTON.





City of Tacoma in 1884

To help trace the evolution of development in Tacoma, it is important to consider its historical roots and the broader regional context. America's pursuit of Manifest Destiny brought about the expansion of much of the United States in the 19th century. Pioneers in the Wild West helped open the resource-rich Pacific Northwest to the eastern United States.

**This chapter overviews the history of Tacoma's urban development patterns. It details the application of municipal zoning code and delves into demographic and housing characteristics to build a broad understanding of Tacoma's residential development context.**

## TAMING THE WILD WEST

The Puget Sound region experienced tremendous population growth between 1870 and 1920, made possible by the expansion of the railroad. As major port cities, Seattle, Mukilteo and Tacoma competed to be the region's dominant center of commerce during this period.<sup>1</sup> On July 3, 1873, the Northern Pacific Railroad Company announced its decision to make Tacoma its Pacific Northwest terminus for the Cascade Line, then under construction. This sealed Tacoma's name as the "City of Destiny" for the high expectations for growth placed on the town, and between 1885 and 1890, Tacoma grew from a town of 7,000 residents to a city abuzz with over 36,000 people—just 6,800 fewer than Seattle.<sup>2</sup>

Following Northern Pacific’s announcement in 1873, General James Tilton proposed a plan for the city that modeled Melbourne, Australia, which called for streets with tight right angles, four-way intersections, and a repeating grid. However, the company commissioned Frederick Law Olmsted—designer of the City of Riverside, IL—for a bolder plan for a city that would soon experience tremendous growth. Olmsted’s unorthodox ideas of city planning called for curvy streets with green spaces and no street corners or straight lines.<sup>3</sup> Newcomers of the West were more interested in speculative gains through buying, parceling and selling land. This called for regular street patterns that made sense to settlers and were easy to divide, giving rise to public outcry over Olmsted’s plan.

In 1874, the town abandoned Olmsted’s plans for a more traditional street grid.<sup>4</sup> “The town will be laid off in large squares with 50-foot front lots, wide alleys, wider streets, and splendid, great avenues—it being substantially the first plan with improvements,” wrote the Daily Pacific Tribune in on February 4, 1874.

The towns of Old Tacoma (now the North End) and New Tacoma (near downtown and the industrial district) merged in 1884. By 1909, most of today’s Tacoma was incorporated, including South

Tacoma. Along with the streetcar system, the industries of timber and shipbuilding boomed until after World War I when the city entered an economic slump. But by 1940 the defense buildup for World War II stimulated growth once more for both shipbuilding and steel after Fort Lewis was sited nearby.<sup>5</sup>

FROZEN IN TIME

By the 1950s, the second wave of suburban development was well under way across most American cities, leading to disinvested central cities when middle-class Americans left for the suburbs to build single-family homes using FHA-guaranteed loans. Urban renewal and New Deal packages spurred major investments in public infrastructure in the mid- to late-1940s. The Tacoma Narrows Bridge (1950) and the construction of Interstate 5 (1965) shifted people out of streetcars and ferries and into automobiles. Simultaneously, there were reforms in Tacoma’s local government in the early 1950s, and the city introduced a systematic zoning code in 1953.

Until this point in time, neighborhoods developed organically, if not haphazardly. Zoning offered a way to secure real property investments and helped address public health concerns through the separation of uses. Tacoma’s zoning code



SUMMARY OF ZONING REGULATION S					
DISTRICT	U S E	HEIGHT FEET	FRONT YARD	SIDE YARD	REAR YARD
"R-1"	ONE-FAMILY DWELLINGS APRIL, PLANTATIONS, SCHOOLS, COMMUNITY CENTERS, LIBRARIES, CHURCHES, AGRICULTURE	35	24	25 FT.	7 1/2 FT.
"R-2"	ONE-FAMILY DWELLINGS USES PERMITTED IN "R-1" DISTRICTS HOME OCCUPATIONS, COLLEGES, UNIVERSITIES	35	24	20 FT.	7 1/2 FT.
"R-3"	TWO-FAMILY DWELLINGS USES PERMITTED IN "R-1" DISTRICTS	35	24	20 FT.	7 1/2 FT.
"R-4"	MULTIPLE-FAMILY DWELLINGS USES PERMITTED IN "R-1" DISTRICTS BOARDING HOUSES, PRIVATE SCHOOLS, PLASTERIES, HOTELS, INSTITUTIONS	60	4	15 FT. OR TO ESTABLISHED SETBACK	7 1/2 FT.
"R-5"	MULTIPLE-FAMILY DWELLINGS USES PERMITTED IN "R-1" DISTRICTS HOTELS AND APARTMENT HOTELS	150	42	10 FT. OR TO ESTABLISHED SETBACK	20 FT.
"C-1"	COMMERCIAL USES PERMITTED IN "R-1" DISTRICTS GENERAL USES NECESSARY TO A WOODS-HOLE	45	3	15 FT. FOR ST. EXCEPT IN A DWELL- ING BLOCK TO DWELLINGS	20 FT.
"C-2"	COMMERCIAL USES PERMITTED IN "R-1" DISTRICTS RETAIL STORES AND SHOPS	45	3	15 FT. FOR ST. EXCEPT IN A DWELL- ING BLOCK TO DWELLINGS	20 FT.
"C-3"	COMMERCIAL USES SAME AS "C-1" COMMERCIAL DISTRICTS	125	0	15 FT. FOR ST. EXCEPT IN A DWELL- ING BLOCK TO DWELLINGS	20 FT.
"B"	BUSINESS USES PERMITTED IN "C-1" COMMERCIAL DISTRICTS, AND SEVERAL LIGHT IN- DUSTRIES THAT ARE NOT DISRUPTIVE	150 FEET AT LOT LINE WITH 10 FT. BACK SETBACK	15 FT. FOR ST. EXCEPT IN A DWELL- ING BLOCK TO DWELLINGS	15 FT. FOR ST. EXCEPT IN A DWELL- ING BLOCK TO DWELLINGS	20 FT.
"M-1"	LIGHT INDUSTRIAL USES PERMITTED IN "C-1" DISTRICTS AND INDUSTRIES NOT DISRUPTIVE BECAUSE OF NOISE, DUST, OR VIBRATION	75	6	15 FT. FOR ST. EXCEPT IN A DWELL- ING BLOCK TO DWELLINGS	20 FT.
"M-2"	HEAVY INDUSTRIAL USES PERMITTED IN "C-1" DISTRICTS HEAVY INDUSTRIES EXCEPT NOISE, VIBRATION, DUST OR DISRUPTIVE	100 FEET AT LOT LINE WITH 10 FT. BACK SETBACK	15 FT. FOR ST. EXCEPT IN A DWELL- ING BLOCK TO DWELLINGS	15 FT. FOR ST. EXCEPT IN A DWELL- ING BLOCK TO DWELLINGS	20 FT.
"M-3"	AND ANY OTHER USES NOT DISRUPTIVE	100 FEET AT LOT LINE WITH 10 FT. BACK SETBACK	15 FT. FOR ST. EXCEPT IN A DWELL- ING BLOCK TO DWELLINGS	15 FT. FOR ST. EXCEPT IN A DWELL- ING BLOCK TO DWELLINGS	20 FT.

of 1953 created five residential zones, four commercial zones and three industrial zones (Table 2.1). For residential areas, it established building standards that included a minimum lot size, minimum setbacks and building height. Tacoma’s base residential zoning standards have remained virtually unchanged since their introduction in 1953.



# CURRENT ZONING

Tacoma’s residential neighborhoods (defined as low- and moderate-density residential zones) add up to over 22,000 acres (35 mi<sup>2</sup>) and account for over 70% of all land in Tacoma (Table 2.3; map on opposite page). These include R-1 through R-4, RCX and NRX. Over half of Tacoma is zoned R-2 alone.

## MODERATE-DENSITY UNITS PROHIBITED IN 60% OF TACOMA

Over 80% of all residential neighborhoods are zoned R-1 and R-2, which comprise over 60% of Tacoma’s land area. These two zones permit almost exclusively detached single-family dwellings, with the exception of attached accessory dwelling units. That leaves less than 3,800 acres of land—just 17% of all residential neighborhood zones—on which middle housing units can be built. A third of this area only allows middle housing as a conditional use. And in some zones, there are parks, cemeteries, golf courses and institutions that already occupy the medium-density land. Despite the near prohibition of middle housing in Tacoma, there are still many middle housing units that pre-date zoning regulations interspersed through the city.

**TABLE 2.1: Summary comparison of zoning standards, Tacoma, WA, 1953 & 2015.**

ZONE	MAX. HEIGHT		MIN. LOT SIZE		MIN. FRONT SETBACK	
	1953	2015	1953	2015	1953	2015
<b>R-1</b>	35 ft	35 ft	7,500 SF	7,500 SF	25 ft	25 ft
<b>R-2</b>	35 ft	35 ft	5,000 SF	5,000 SF	20 ft	25 ft
<b>R-3</b>	35 ft	35 ft	5,000 SF	5,000 SF	20 ft	25 ft
<b>R-4</b>	60 ft	60 ft	5,000 SF	5,000 SF	15 ft	20 ft

Sources: Summary of zoning code in 1953, provided by City of Tacoma Planning and Development Services; TMC 13-06, Table D, Lot size and building envelope standards, pp. 13-82–13-83. All standards for standard-sized lots.

**TABLE 2.2: Summary of permitted residential structures, Tacoma, WA, 2015.**

MIDDLE HOUSING	RESIDENTIAL STRUCTURE	R-1	R-2	R-2 SRD	HMR-SRD	R-3	R-4L	R-4	RCX	NRX
	Single-family, detached	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
	Duplex	N	N	CU	CU	P	P	P	P	CU
	Triplex	N	N	CU	CU	P	P	P	P	CU
	Multi-family (4+)	N	N	N	N	N	P	P	P	N
	Townhouse	N	N	CU	N	P	P	P	P	CU
	ADU, attached	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
	ADU, detached	N	N	N	N	P	P	P	P	P

Sources: TMC 13.06.100, Table C, Land use requirements, pp. 13-75–13-82; TMC 13.06.300, Table D, Land use requirements, pp. 13-115–13-121.

**Table 2.3: Land area by zone, Tacoma, WA, 2015.**

R-ZONE †	TOTAL ACRES	SHARE OF LAND ‡	SHARE OF R-ZONES
<b>R-1</b>	2,410	7.9%	10.8%
<b>R-2</b>	16,033	52.5%	72.1%
<b>R-2 SRD</b>	998	3.3%	4.5%
<b>HMR-SRD</b>	217	0.7%	1.0%
<b>R-3</b>	1,242	4.1%	5.6%
<b>R-4L</b>	437	1.4%	2.0%
<b>R-4</b>	338	1.1%	1.5%
<b>RCX</b>	540	1.8%	2.4%
<b>NRX</b>	11	0.0%	0.0%

Source: City of Tacoma shapefiles, GIS analysis by authors.

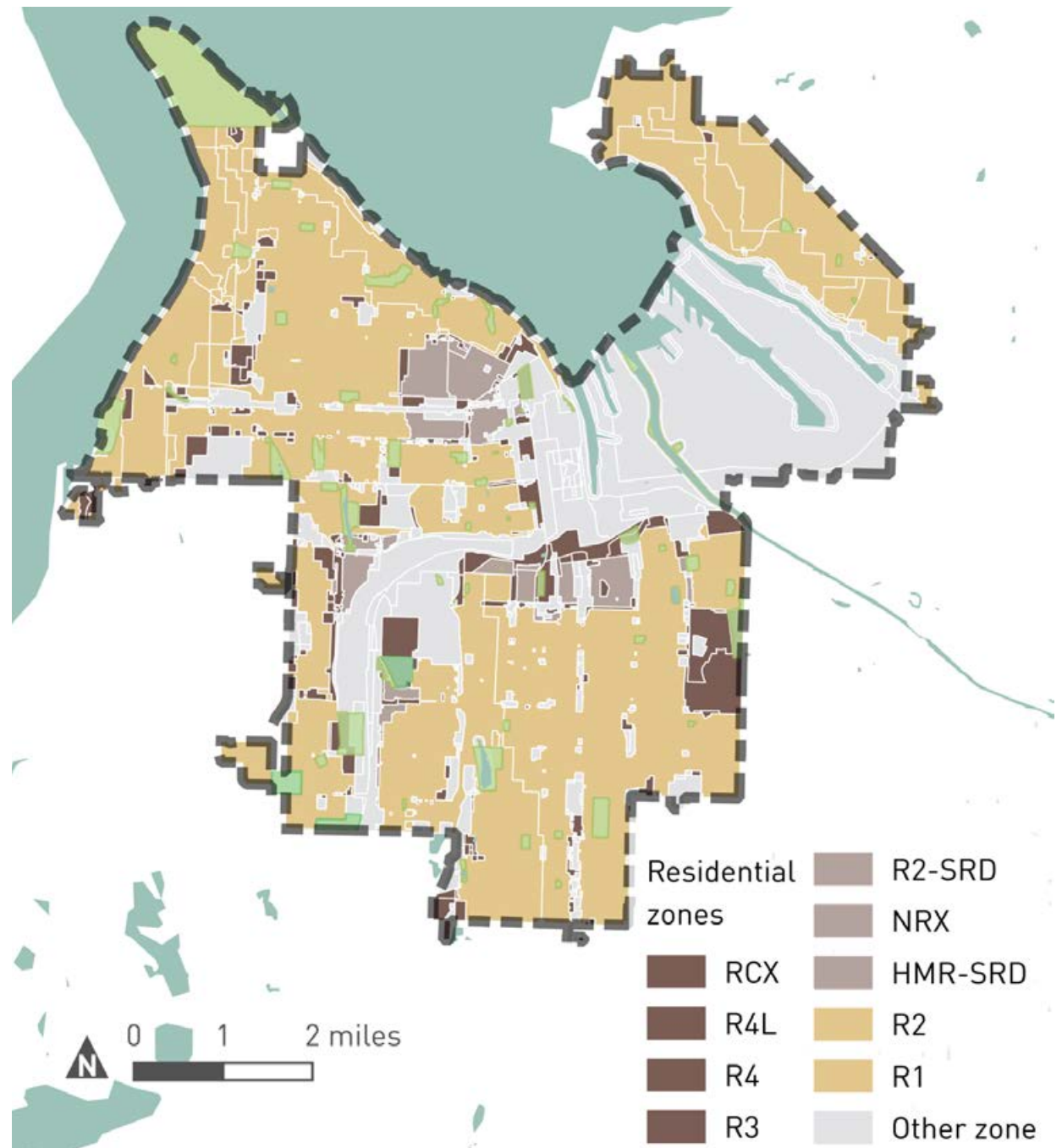
†: Only low- and medium-density residential zones considered. ‡: Excludes all S-zones and RUS (Ruston).

## FINDING THE “MISSING MIDDLE”

Although local leaders use zoning regulation to promote social welfare, this tool can be misused to steer markets away from socially optimal outcomes. Increasing access to middle housing is one area where Tacoma’s zoning code underperforms. In this analysis, data are divided into three categories of housing types: single-family units, small multi-family units (duplexes, triplexes and quadplexes) and large multi-family units (five units or more). Though different from our own categorization of multi-family types, this information still shows that Tacoma’s zoning code polarizes development, promoting mostly single-family homes and mid- and high-rise apartments. Indeed, over 80% of residential neighborhoods are zoned R-1 and R-2, which do not permit small multi-family units. The areas where middle housing is permitted are limited primarily to neighborhoods abutting commercial or mixed-use corridors.

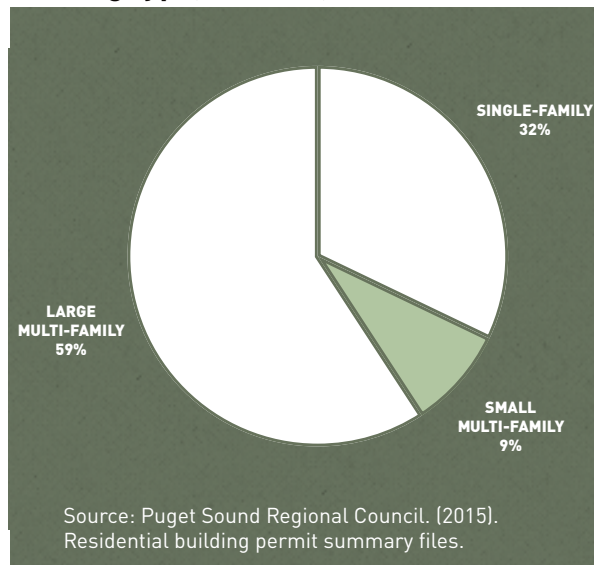
To illustrate the point, consider the housing market in Tacoma and Pierce County between 2009 and 2013—the most recent data available. During this period, about 1,700 housing units were built in Tacoma and about 9,600 in the rest of Pierce County (Figures 1 & 2). Over 60% of the units built in Tacoma during this period were large multi-family; additionally, over

Map 2.1: Residential zones in Tacoma, 2015.

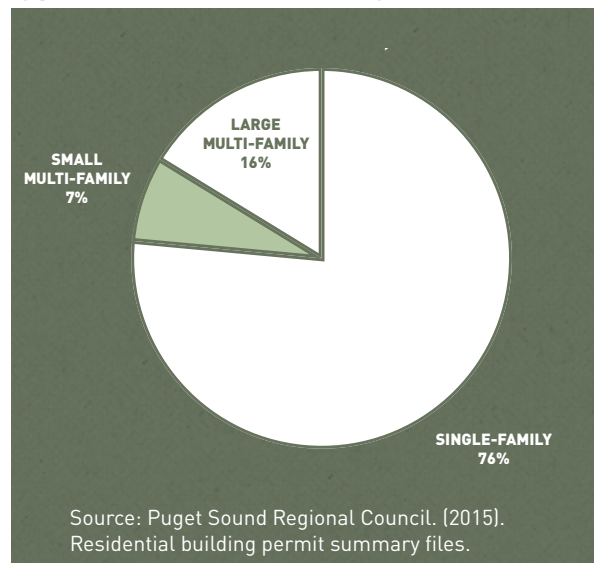




**Figure 2.1: Net units gained by housing type, Tacoma, 2009-13.**



**Figure 2.2: Net units gained by housing type, rest of Pierce County, 2009-13.**



half of the stock came from structures with 50 or more units. This contrasts with the rest of Pierce County, which built nearly 80% single-family units. While it is beneficial for residents of Tacoma to have more multi-family housing options, both areas have produced a lack of middle housing options for their residents.

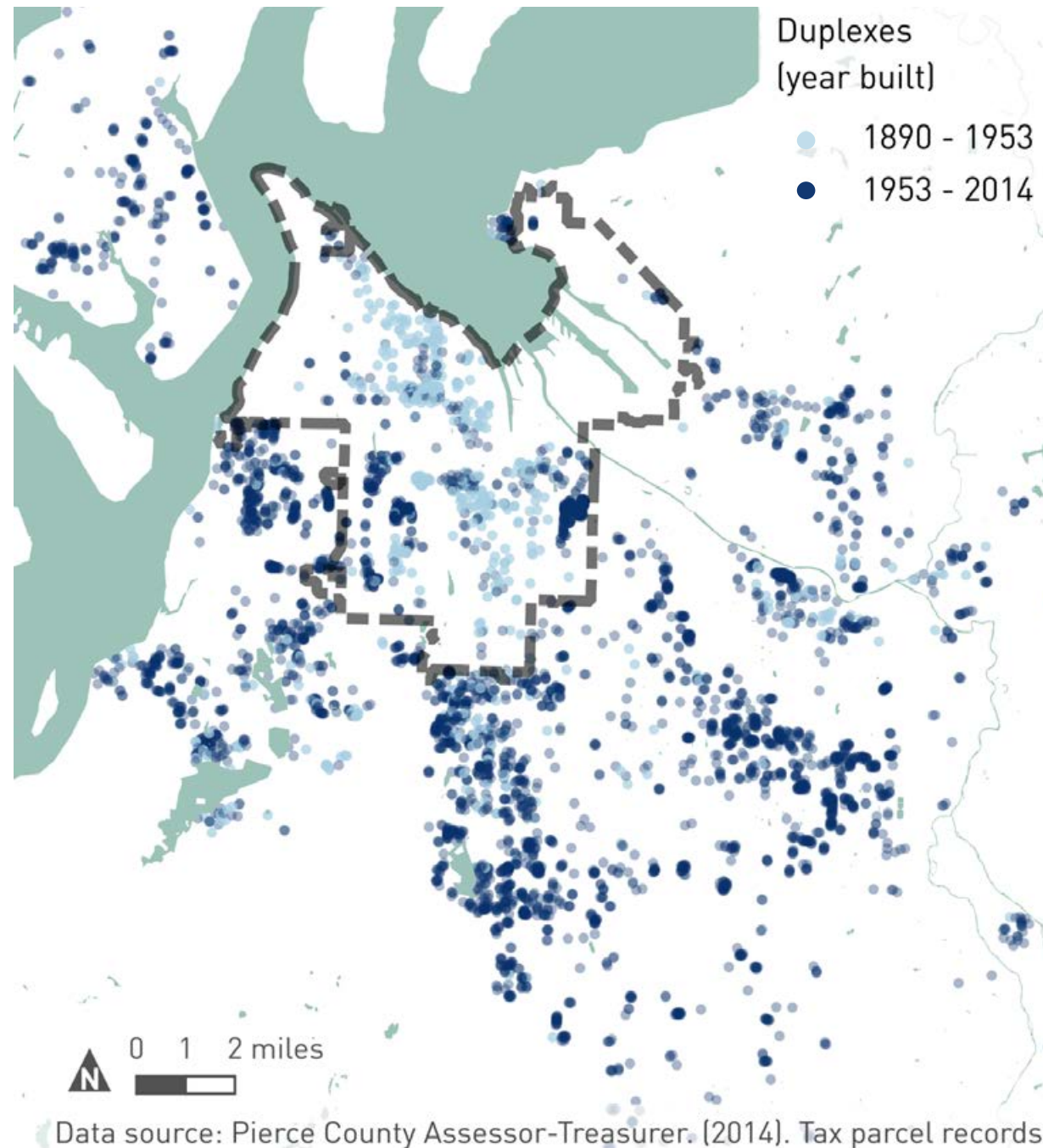
The development pattern in the rest of Pierce County may be quite similar to the R-1 and R-2 zones of Tacoma—relatively suburban with many single-family homes. But land in Tacoma is more valuable. This is because the downtown core—where most of the large multi-family units are built—is a desirable location for its proximity to people, money, culture and history.

The further away from the core one gets, development patterns become more suburban. In this sense, we would expect to see fewer middle housing and much fewer large multi-family units toward the fringe. Yet what we see is the same proportion of middle housing being built in both locations.

This suggests that even in the suburbs, there is a demand for middle housing. But this proportion does not increase as one approaches the central core, where the land values are higher and could support more middle housing.

To support this finding, we turn to Map 2.2, which shows duplex units built before and after 1953 in Pierce County. We see most of the duplexes in R-1 and R-2 zones are built prior to zoning laws taking effect, which “grandfathers” the units but places them on a nonconforming use list—if a unit is destroyed, the owner would not be allowed to replace it with another duplex. But we also see more recent units built on the very boundary of Tacoma, particularly toward the south near Parkland, University Place and Spanaway. If Tacoma’s primary zoning designation (R-1 and R-2) allowed for small multi-family units, would this spatial distribution expand into Tacoma’s city limits?

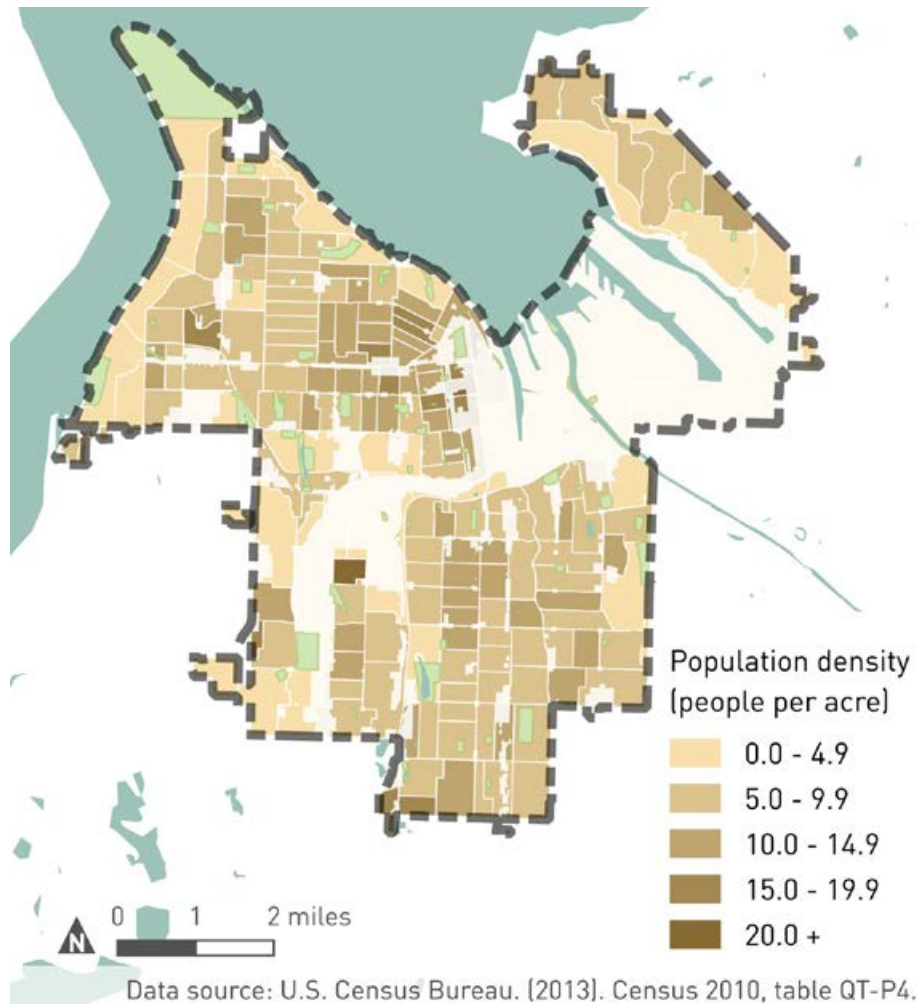
Map 2.2: Duplexes built pre- and post-zoning code regulations, Pierce County.



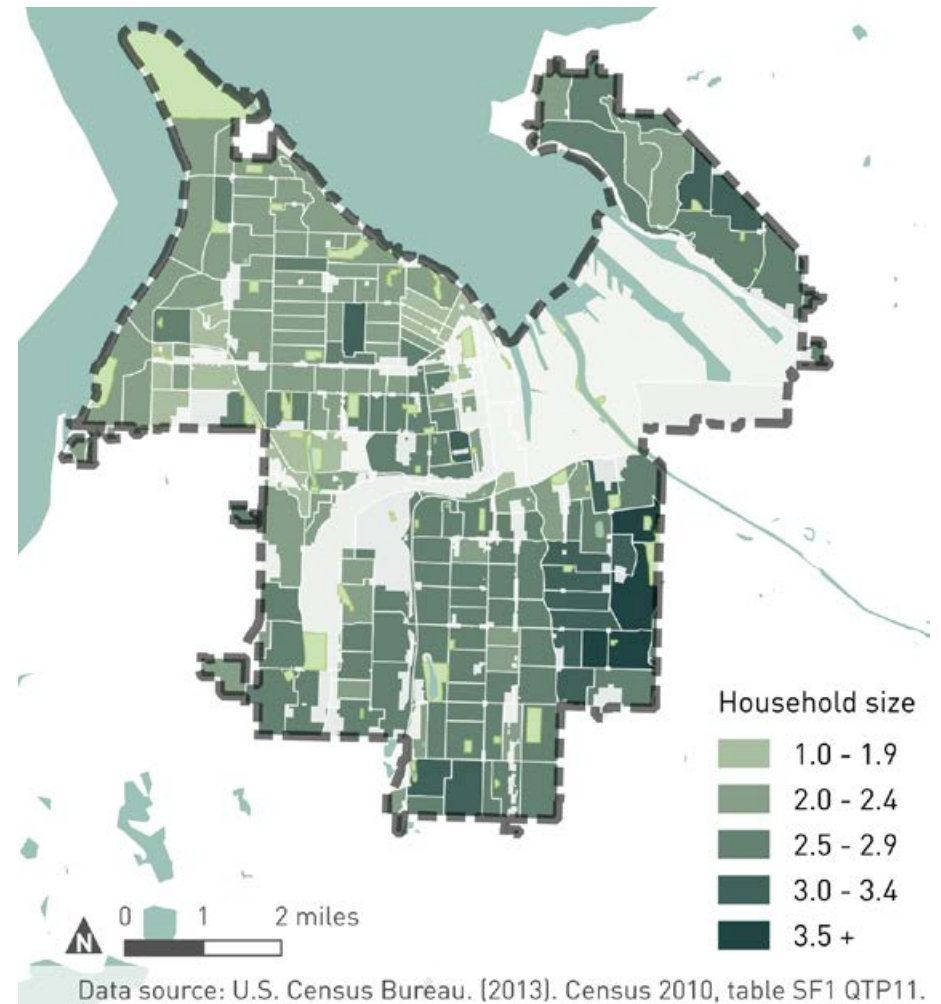
# DEMOGRAPHIC AND HOUSING INDICATORS

The rest of this chapter presents recent demographic and housing trends using data from the 2010 Census. This section adds additional context about the people who live in Tacoma and about conditions relating to housing. Only indicators that contribute to conversations around pattern areas are included here. Maps 2.3-2.6 explore demographic trends across the city. Maps 2.7-2.10 delve into housing characteristics.

**Map 2.3: Population density, Tacoma, 2010.**



**Map 2.4: Household size, Tacoma, 2010.**



## DEMOGRAPHICS

### POPULATION DENSITY

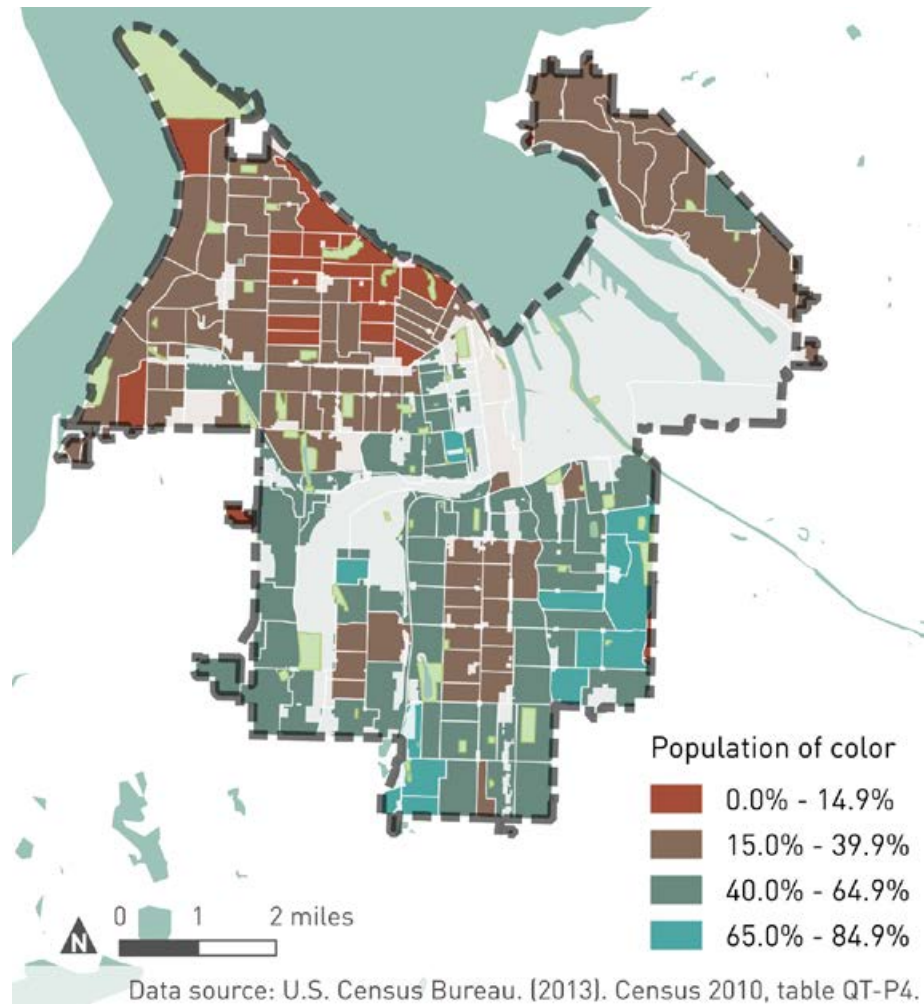
The number of people per acre of land in the city is about 6.7. Higher population density generally means a more efficient use of resources and services, such as public transit, building energy and neighborhood businesses.

### HOUSEHOLD SIZE

Tacoma's average household size is 2.4 people per household. This indicator complements population density by showing how many people are living in a single unit. Larger households in moderately sized homes contribute to density. Additionally, households with more members will require different housing types than smaller households.



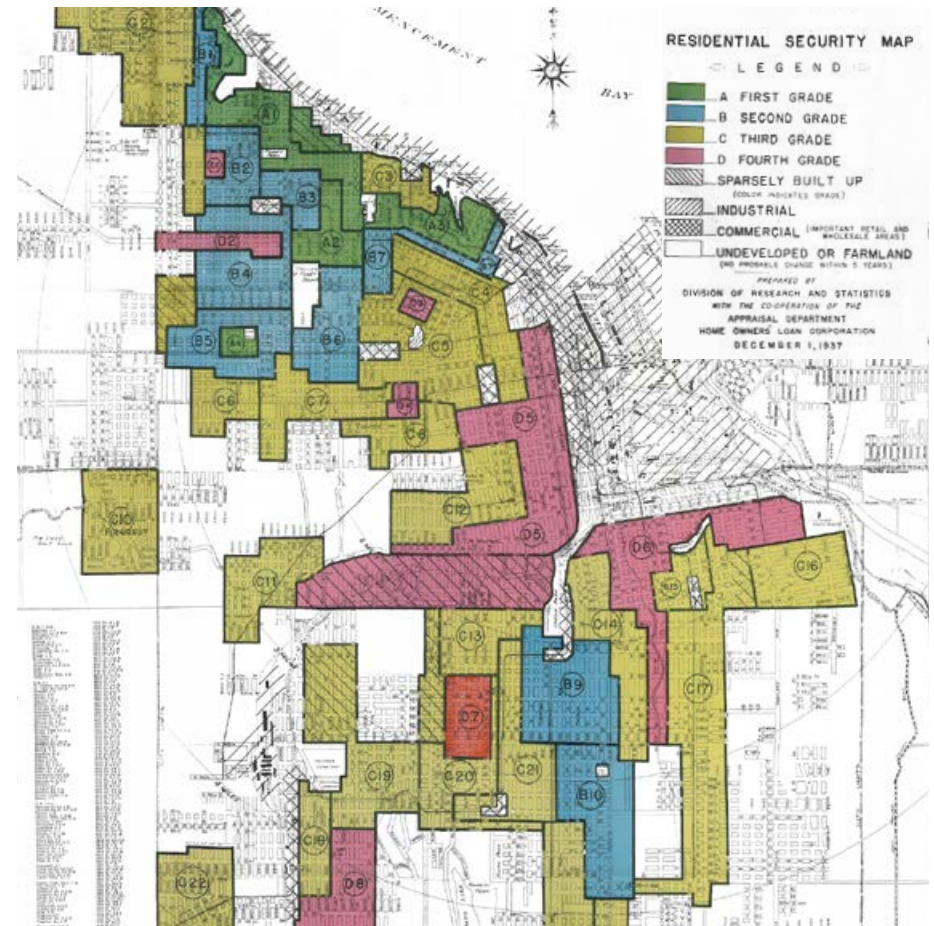
**Map 2.5: Populations of color, Tacoma, 2010.**



### POPULATIONS OF COLOR

Nearly 40% of Tacoma’s residents are persons of color—anyone who does not identify as “white alone, not Hispanic/Latino.” Knowing the spatial distribution of the population of color is crucial to help understand segregation and how public investments can be better leveraged to increase social equity.

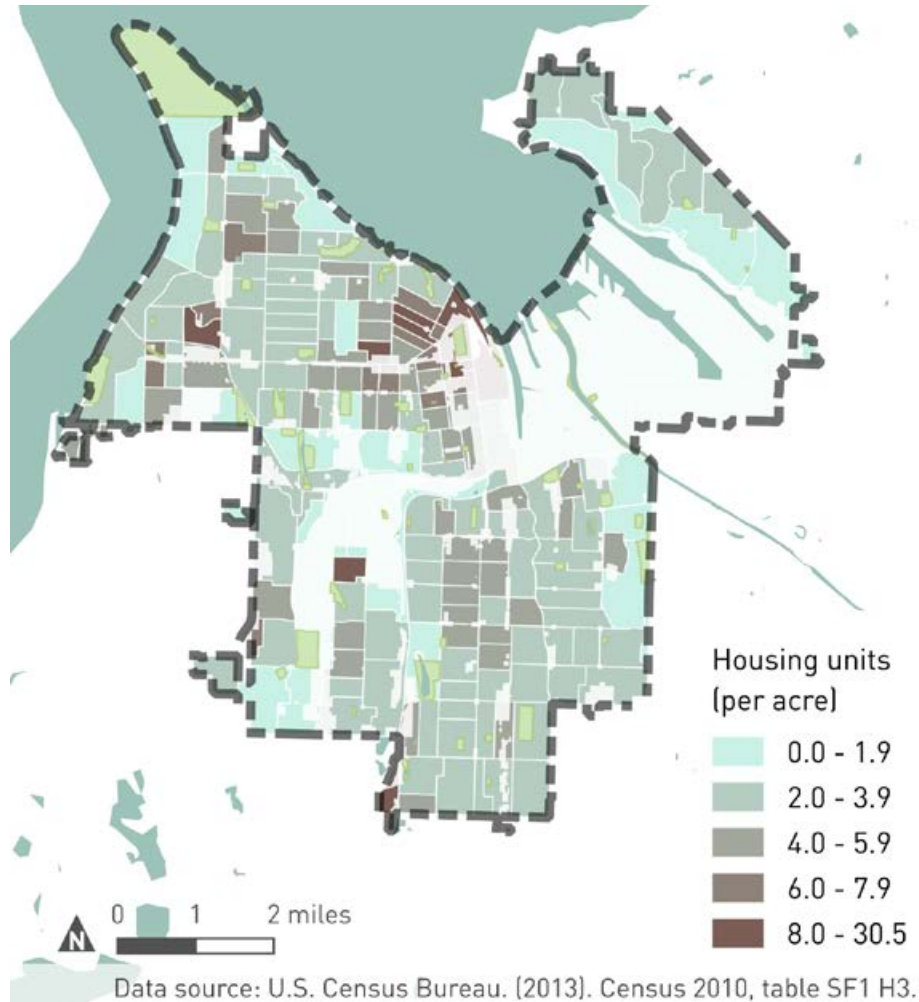
**Map 2.6: Historic redlining map, 1937, Tacoma.**



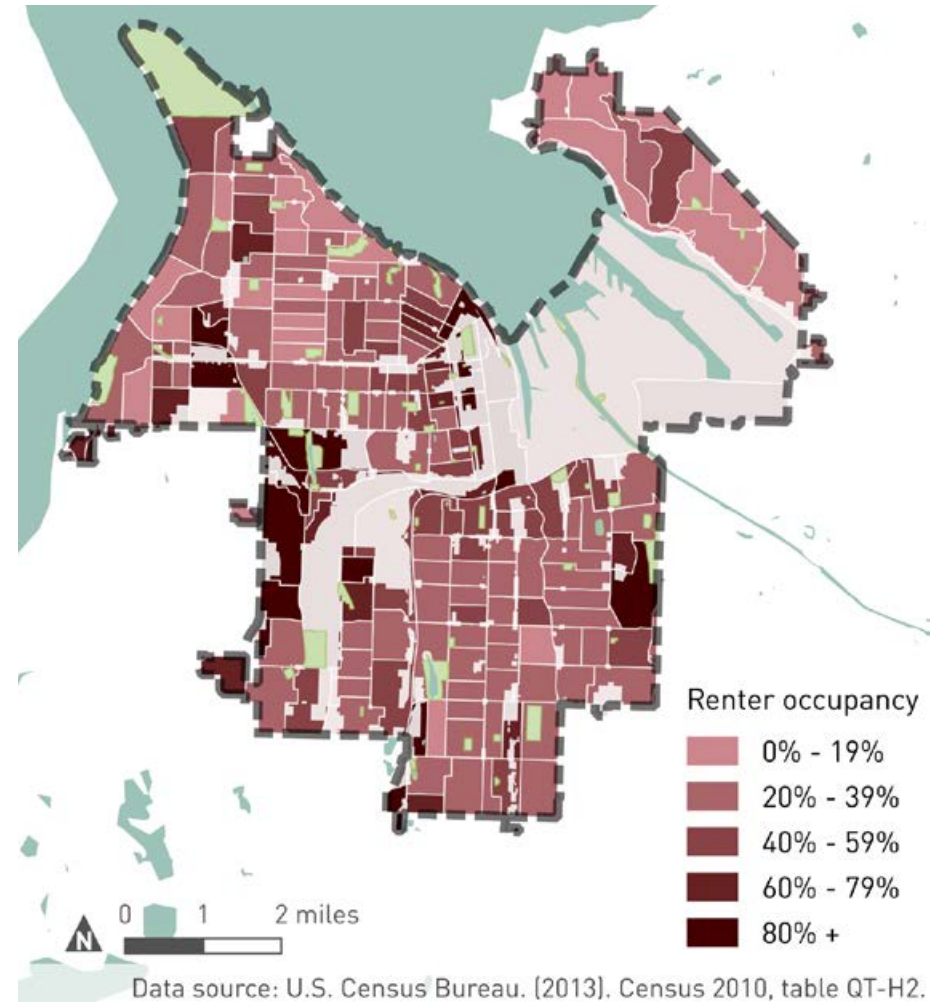
### REDLINING IN TACOMA

Redlining is the practice of denying or limiting financial services in certain neighborhoods based on racial or ethnic composition without regard to creditworthiness. Redlining was encouraged by policies of the Federal Housing Administration in the 20th century, causing segregation in many American cities. In Tacoma, “red lines” were drawn in downtown and in Central Tacoma, which was later razed to make way for I-5, pushing many residents of color to other parts of the city, such as the East Side.

**Map 2.7: Housing unit density per acre, Tacoma, 2010.**



**Map 2.8: Renter-occupied units, Tacoma, 2010.**



## HOUSING CHARACTERISTICS

### HOUSING DENSITY

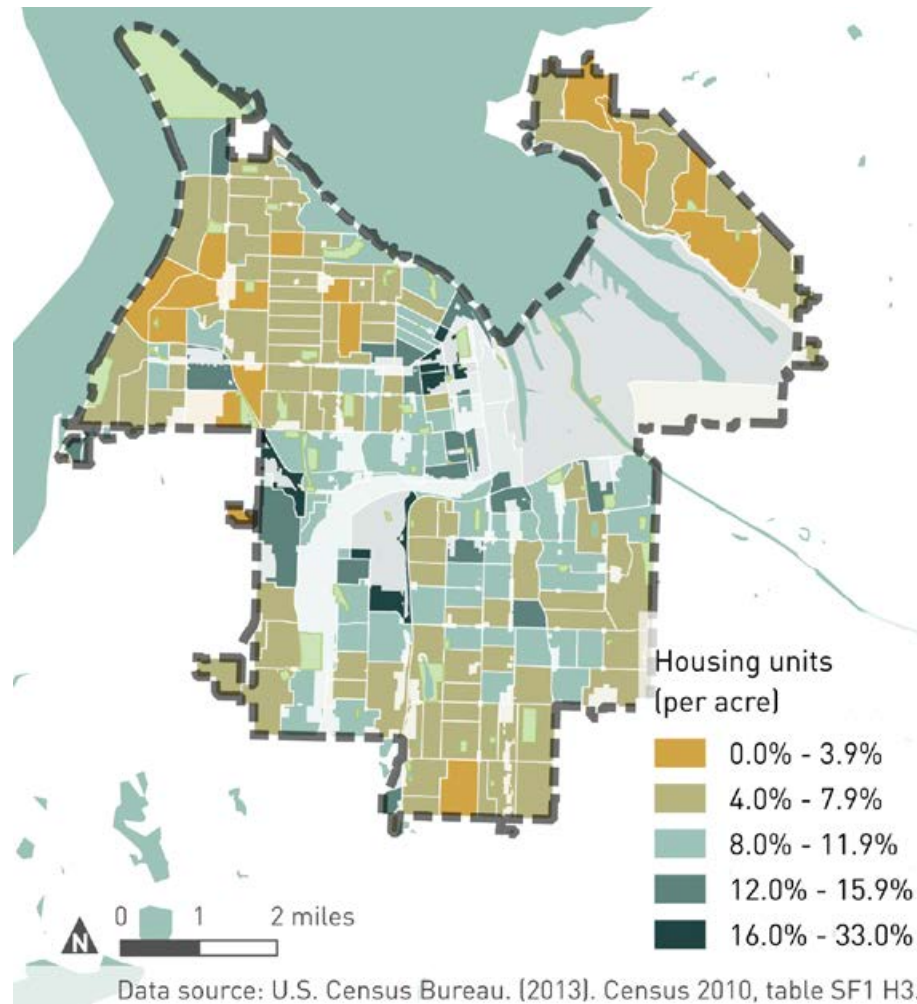
Similar to population density, the number of housing units per acre reveals how compact the built environment is. The more capacity an area has for people, the better it can support enhanced services.

### RENTER-OCCUPIED UNITS

Renter-occupied units account for 46 percent of all housing in the city, compared to Seattle's 52 percent. To accommodate 127,000 new residents, the City must consider the role homeownership will play for current and future residents. Additionally, the City must seriously consider social equity, as vulnerable populations are more likely to be displaced renter when housing values rise.



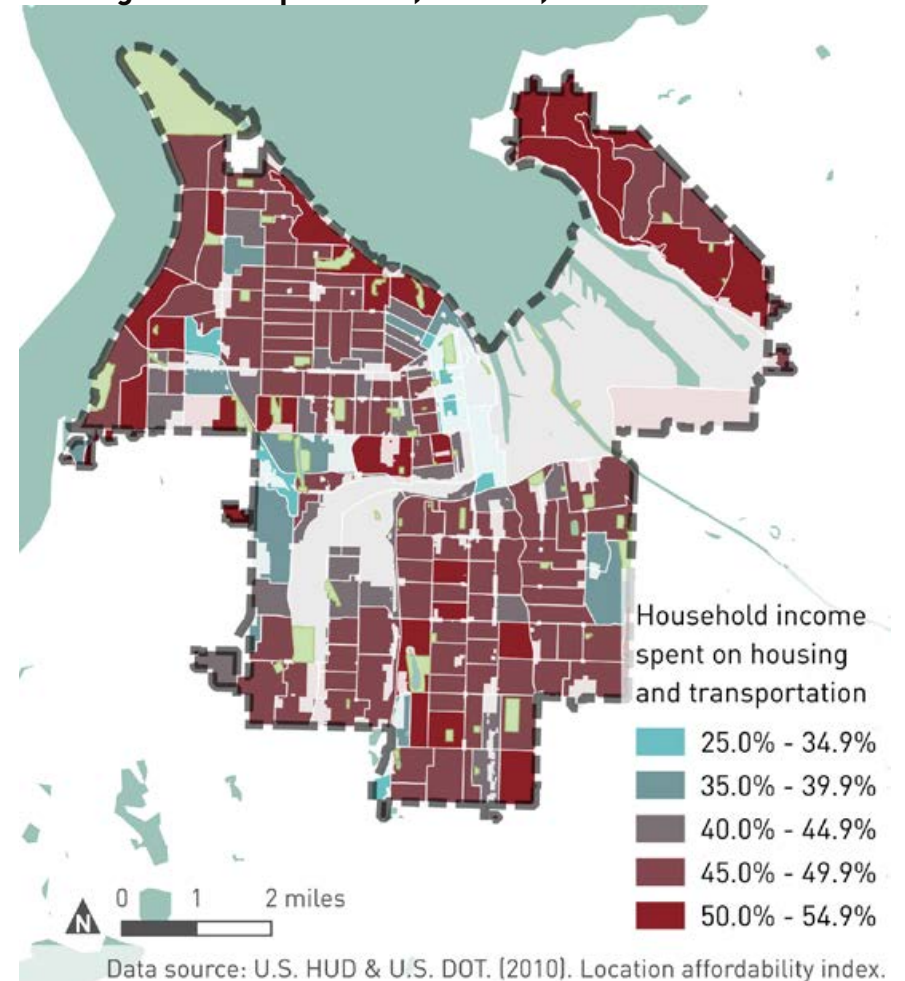
**Map 2.9: Housing vacancy rate, Tacoma, 2010.**



### VACANCY RATE

Vacancy rates are an indicator of a healthy housing market. It allows mobility across the city and sends signals to developers on when to develop new units. Vacancy rates that are low signal when to develop new units, and areas with high vacancy rates may be favorable to renters.

**Map 2.10: Percent of household income spent on housing and transportation, Tacoma, 2010.**



### COST OF HOUSING AND TRANSPORTATION

According to federal standards, households should spend no more than 45% of monthly income on housing and transportation. Households earning the median regional income<sup>†</sup> throughout the city often pay more than this.

<sup>†</sup> This model uses Seattle-Tacoma MSA's median income of \$67,400 in 2010 and assumes a household four in size with two commuters.

# HOW DO THESE TRENDS INFORM A PATTERN AREA STUDY?

This chapter presented the context for talking about Tacoma's pattern areas. We discussed the history of Tacoma and its place in the broader regional context, discovering how it nearly became the region's commercial hub in the late 19th century. We also looked at current and historic zoning in the city. We found that Tacoma's residential neighborhoods cover most of the city, yet few locations allow for moderate-density housing options, despite neighboring areas of Pierce County accommodating numerous duplexes. Last, we looked at demographic and housing indicators to visualize recent trends across the city.

This information is key for utilizing pattern areas and forming recommendations. They provide guidance on where certain policies may more make sense than others. For example, in places that already have higher population and housing unit densities, middle housing could more easily "fit in." Mapping populations

of color helps remind policymakers of the equity considerations for which we must account.

This chapter also set the stage showing the need for the "missing middle." It highlighted some of the problems Tacoma's current zoning regulations are not addressing and suggests opportunities for creating more socially and environmentally optimal outcomes.

Context-sensitive development starts with understanding the existing conditions of a place. This transcends neighborhood design and considers the broader social, economic, environmental, political and regulatory factors that define a place. The next chapter focuses on the physical context of Tacoma and develops six pattern areas based on a study of important physical characteristics that link neighborhoods together and help make each place in the city unique.

The background of the slide is a photograph of a suburban residential street. It features a row of two-story houses with light-colored siding and dark roofs. Several cars are parked along the street, and a trash can is visible in the foreground. The entire image is framed by a thick, dark red dashed border.

## CHAPTER 3

# RESIDENTIAL PATTERN AREAS



**T**acoma has many areas with unique qualities and character. By exploring the characteristics of these neighborhoods, we can begin to understand what makes each neighborhood different. An increased understanding of neighborhoods yields improved choices for policy direction for residential infill development. This makes it easier to develop better design standards and placemaking practices that reflect each neighborhood's unique identity.

**This chapter first presents a methodology for identifying patterns in the built environment of Tacoma's residential areas and examines the results of this urban form assessment.**

# THE LINK BETWEEN PATTERNS AND CHARACTER

Many qualities define the neighborhoods we live in—from the people who live next door, to the houses found on the block, to community green space, or an iconic local restaurant. The identity of a neighborhood can be enhanced through strategies that build on these existing elements to create a sense of place.

A challenge in developing placemaking strategies is first determining what and where key places are and then how to evaluate the factors that lend to their distinct character. Although not mutually exclusive, there is a distinction between physical patterns and neighborhood character. Both are essential to understanding neighborhoods.

## NEIGHBORHOOD CHARACTER

Gritty. Upscale. Hip. Unsafe. Historic. These are all words people use to describe the character of the neighborhoods they live in. These are things that aren't easily measured but can be described in great length. How it looks, feels and functions all shape what neighborhood character is. Social, economic, demographic, historical and cultural factors are all important elements of neighborhood character. These are what give each neighborhood a sense of place. Chapter 4 explores neighborhood character in great detail based on qualities identified by Tacoma residents during community engagement activities.

## PHYSICAL PATTERNS

Although more easily quantified, physical patterns are a relatively abstract concept. These are features of the built and natural environments that shape and enhance neighborhood identity. There are five primary building blocks of urban form



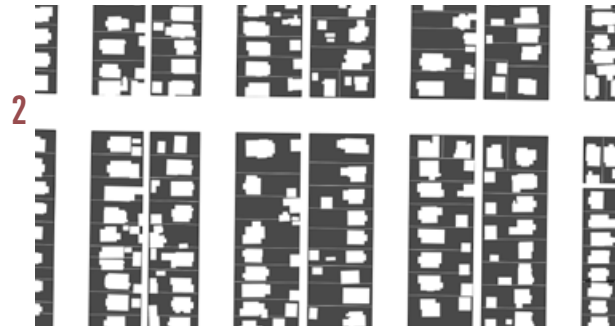
that comprise physical patterns of the neighborhoods we live in, outlined below.<sup>1</sup>

### 1. BLOCK STRUCTURE AND STREET PATTERNS

These are the city's skeleton that makes up the overall urban framework. The shape and function of the grid is a contingency of history. In the 19th and early 20th century, streetcar lines and land speculation helped create a compact, regular street grid. In the mid- to late-20th century, the interstate system and suburban development created more insulated neighborhoods through fewer street connections and curvilinear streets.

### 2. LOT PATTERNS AND BUILDING PLACEMENT

How buildings relate to the street contributes to how people perceive their neighborhoods. Building frontages (how the face of a building is designed) set the rhythm of a street. Compare a block of houses with prominent garages in the front to a block with porches in the front and the distinction is clear.



### 3. STREET DESIGN

Sidewalks, landscaping and street width inform the experience of people in their neighborhoods and how people use their space. A narrow street may give a sense of coziness to an area, whereas a wide boulevard can make a space feel open.

### 4. BUILDING FORMS AND TYPES

Building scale and architectural style influences the perceived character of neighborhoods. Homes that have a low roof pitch and use natural materials can make someone feel they are on the coast of Washington, compared to the iconic Craftsman style of the Pacific Northwest.

### 5. VEGETATION, LANDSCAPING AND NATURAL FEATURES

How the built environment relates to the natural environment influences the feeling and character of neighborhoods. Hedges may give a sense of privacy to a neighborhood whereas open yards enhance the feeling of transparency and permeability in the neighborhood.



Each of these building blocks describe the physical landscape of a neighborhood. The interactions between these physical features define the appearance of neighborhoods across Tacoma.

## BLOCK STRUCTURES OF TACOMA

The block structure of the city has three general patterns. The **first** is characterized by a tight grid with small blocks (between 250' and 400' wide) and regular, repeating intersections. This block structure also has many alleys, which make these areas more permeable. This type is found in pre-war neighborhoods, such as North Slope, Central Tacoma and the north half of the South End.

The **second** block structure pattern has curvilinear streets, culs-de-sac and irregular street patterns. There are few alleys in this pattern, and one must make more circuitous routes to navigate through these areas. This type is primarily found in the West Slope, Northeast and in the south of the South End.

The **third** block structure is somewhere between the first two. These areas have longer blocks (between 400' and 800' wide), more "dead end" streets, fewer alleys and a grid pattern that has irregularities. This structure is found in central South End, South Tacoma and the Eastside.

## DEFINING TACOMA'S RESIDENTIAL PATTERNS

Identifying the physical pattern areas that define Tacoma's different neighborhoods is the first step in exploring context-sensitive infill design strategies. After identifying these observable and relatively objective physical characteristics, we will have a better measuring stick with which to evaluate the more subjective elements of a neighborhood's character. This approach does not prioritize the physical pattern and design components over the softer elements of neighborhood character, but instead recognizes the identification of neighborhoods by physical form as the first step in describing neighborhood character.

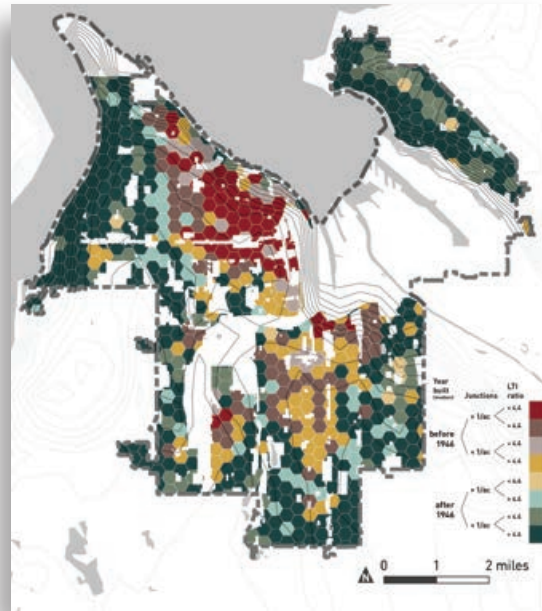
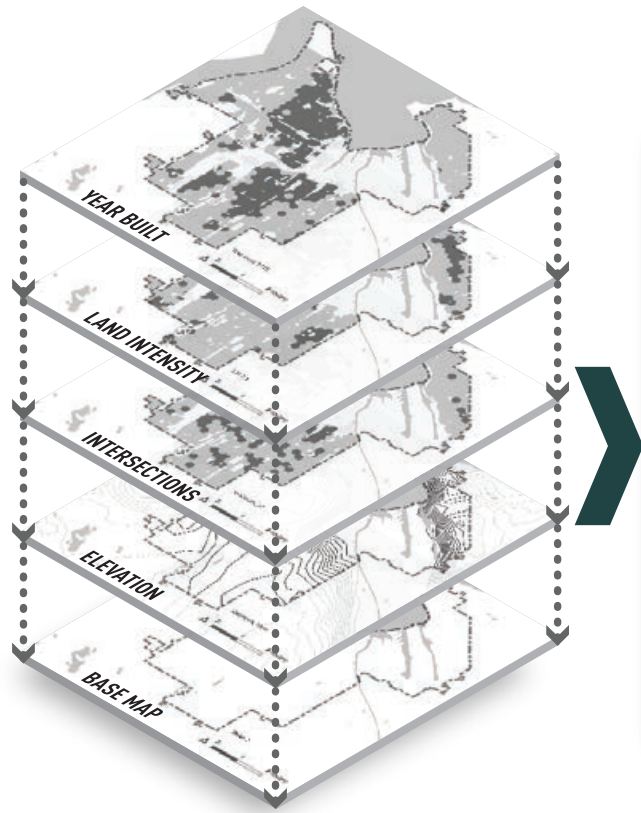
# PATTERN AREAS: ONE SIZE DOES NOT FIT ALL

When crafting policies guiding urban form in Tacoma, it is important to recognize that as distinct as they may be, Tacoma's neighborhoods are also interconnected through physical features of the built and natural environment. In one pattern area, the appearance formed by the building blocks of these physical features may create a very different appearance than in another pattern area, but in each scenario these physical characteristics play an important role in defining urban form.

**This section analyzes key physical features to arrive at six distinct pattern areas of Tacoma's residential neighborhoods.**

## METHODOLOGY

A comprehensive methodology can be found in Appendix B. In summary, we conducted a literature review into relevant methods for analysis of urban form. In addition, the team consulted with a subject matter expert to understand the



general approach. Following background research on urban form analysis, the team selected indicators to analyze using a GIS (geographic information system, a mapping program) and database tools explained below. Although primarily quantitative, the team interpreted the results of the analyses to arrive at the final pattern area map. Some results required further analysis using Google Street View and site visits to confirm pattern area assignments. Finally, the team utilized Adobe Photoshop for post-processing map finessing.

## LIMITATIONS: NOT ALL TRENDS ARE MEANINGFUL

Although we were able to collect and analyze a trove of data, these trends do not replace local knowledge.

## THE BUILDING BLOCKS USED IN THIS ANALYSIS

The relevant metrics and features selected for analysis include natural and physical features, block structure, intersection density, median year built of residential structures and

land-to-improvement ratio. Each metric is explained in the following maps.

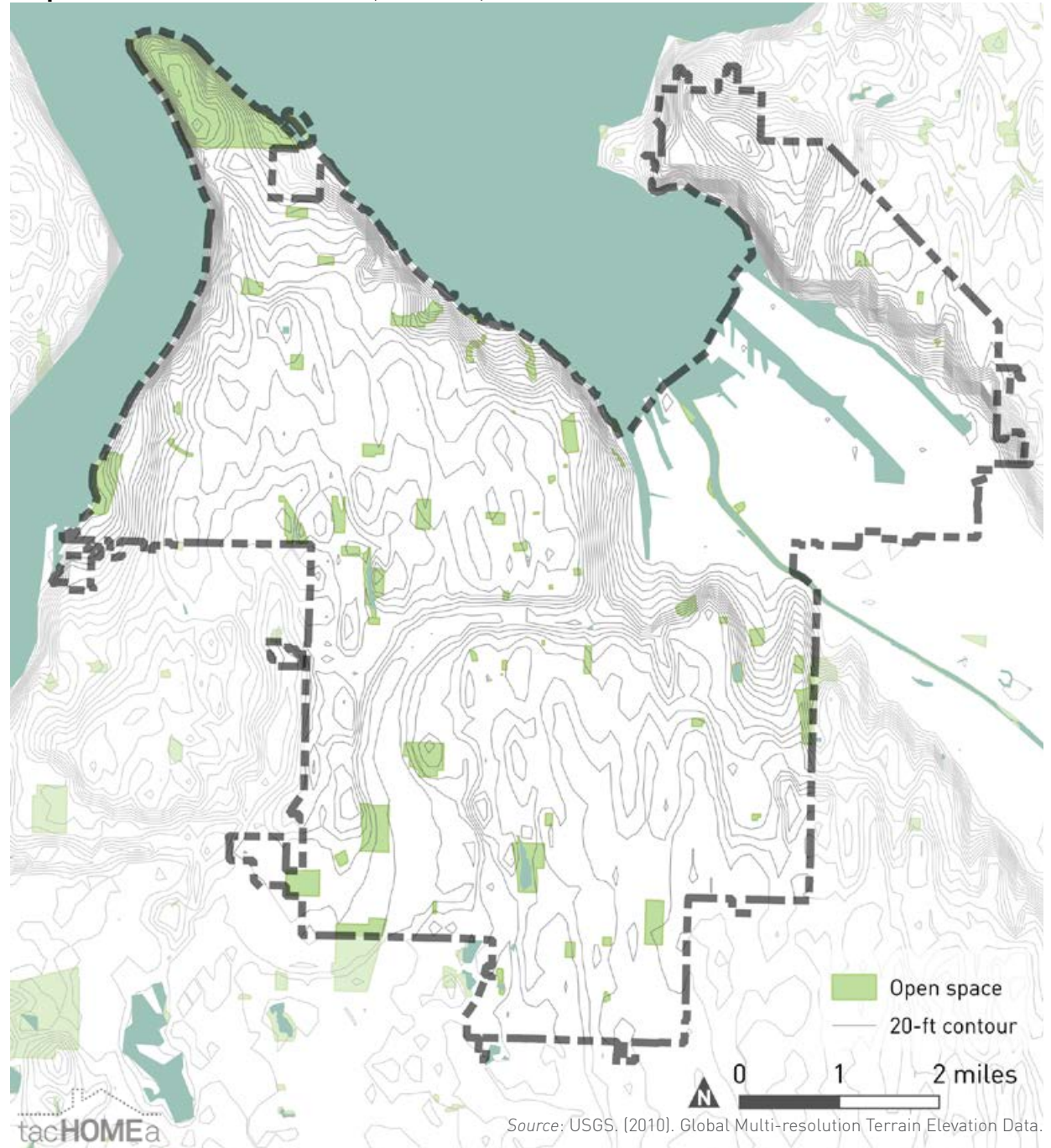
**This analysis should serve as a first step in moving the city toward an urban design framework that emphasizes context-sensitive policy decisions.**



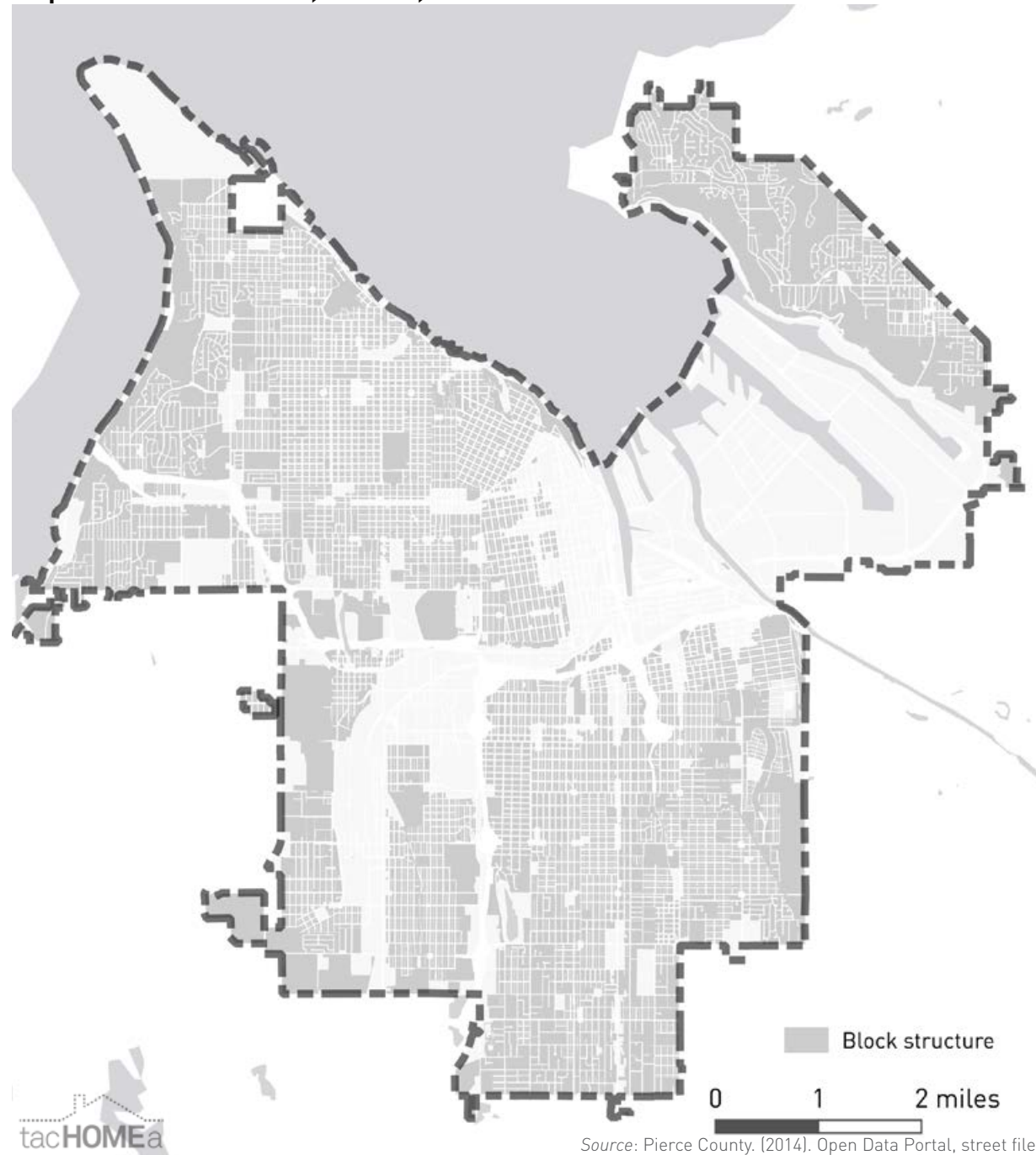
## NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

An understanding of the natural features that vary across Tacoma is essential for visualizing the nuances of development in different areas. For example, in areas with major slopes and views, houses are generally built to preserve those views. Additionally, semi-rural development historically happened more commonly in flatter areas.

**Map 3.1: Natural environment, Tacoma, 2015.**



**Map 3.2: Block structure, Tacoma, 2015.**



## BLOCK STRUCTURE

An aerial view of Tacoma's street network highlights the major differences between a more rectilinear (straight), historic network and a more curvilinear (curving) post-war network, which has implications for how neighborhoods look.

### WHY HIGHLIGHT ALLEYWAYS?

Alleyways are generally conducive to out-of-sight off-street parking. This usually means that the lack of garages at the front of lots allow for homes and blocks to be more pedestrian- rather than auto-oriented.



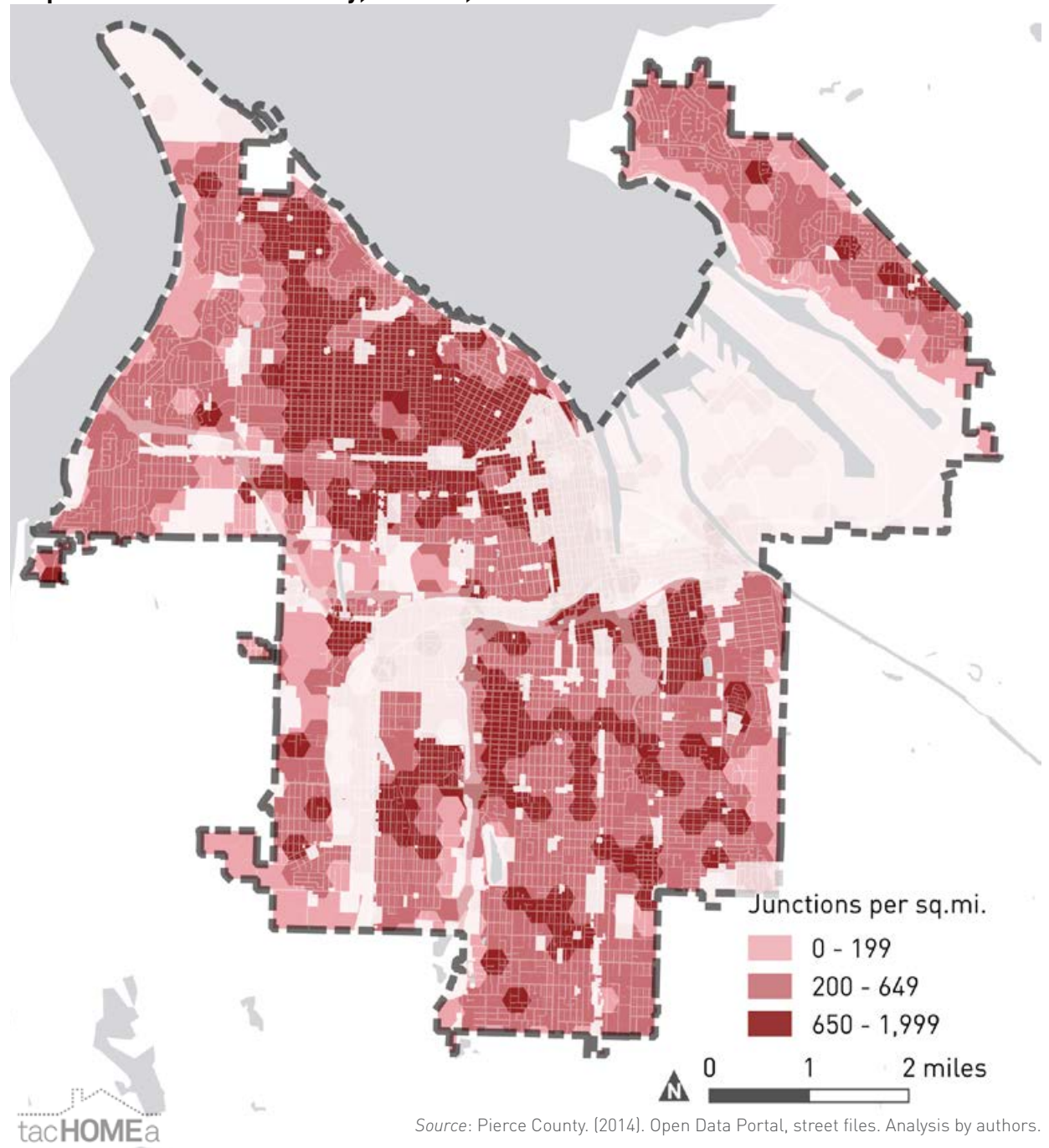


## INTERSECTION DENSITY

Intersection density is a measure of street network accessibility. The more intersections in an area, the better chance it has to support a walkable environment, which leads to improved health outcomes, greater use of public transportation and diminished environmental impacts. Intersection density here is measured as the number of junctions (i.e., a T-shaped intersection would yield 3 junctions; a 4-way intersection would yield 4 junctions).

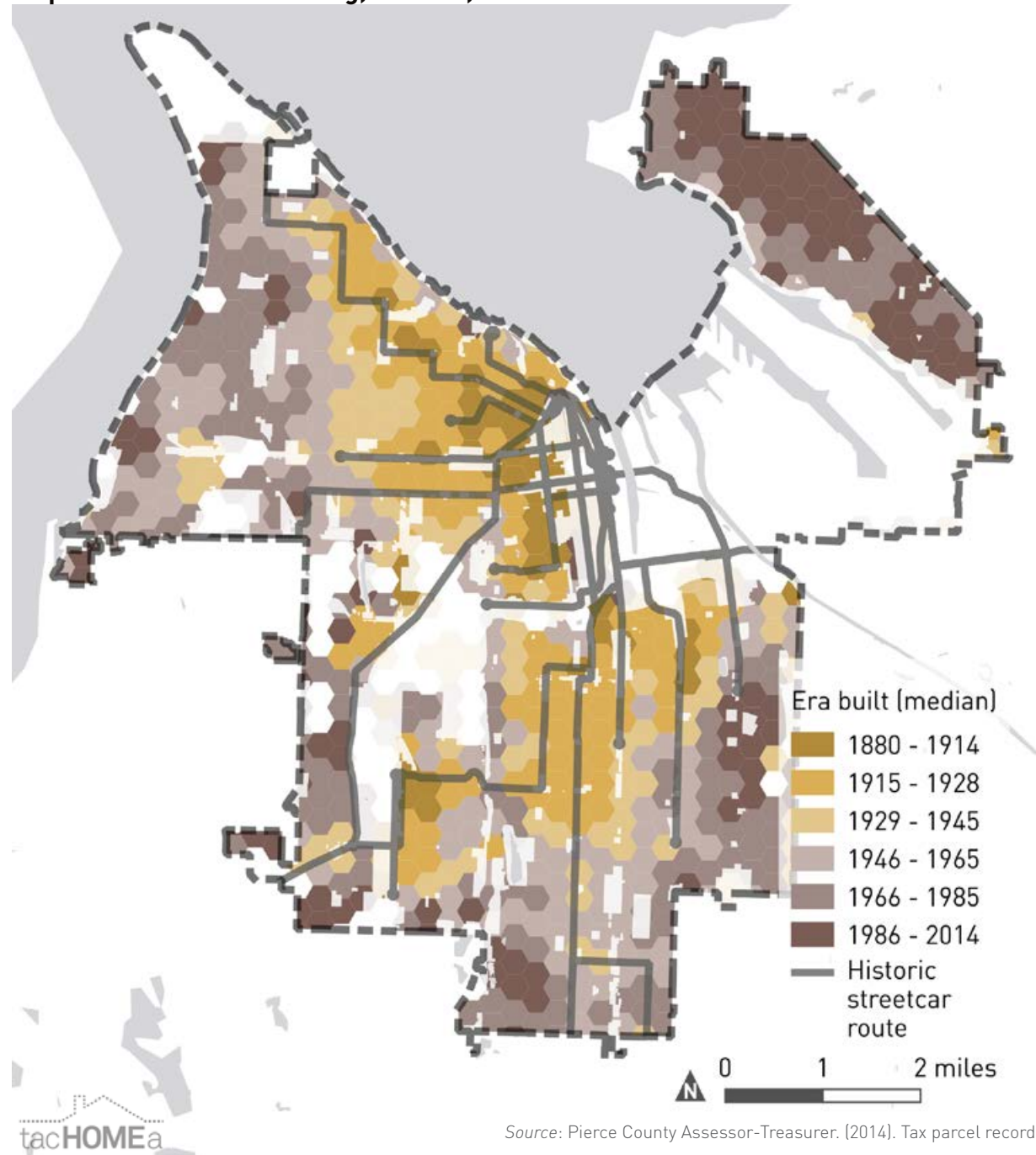
By showing the cumulative number of intersection junctions (places where streets intersect) under each hexagon, we can visualize where neighborhoods are permeable or not. “Permeable” means that travel through them is easy because of a complete street network. This map illustrates how difficult it would be for a pedestrian to navigate a given area.

**Map 3.3: Intersection density, Tacoma, 2015.**



Source: Pierce County. (2014). Open Data Portal, street files. Analysis by authors.

**Map 3.4: Era built of housing, Tacoma, 2015.**



Source: Pierce County Assessor-Treasurer. [2014]. Tax parcel records.

## ERA BUILT

Pre-war (approximately pre-1940s) housing was built without many modern amenities and construction techniques, meaning that construction is generally (though not exclusively) harder to the elements, hand-crafted and more pedestrian-oriented. Post-war housing was developed with more amenities, like air conditioning and the proliferation of cars, so house design often reflects that with prominent garages and less expensive materials and labor. Pre-1950s housing was also built prior to the adoption of zoning code, so residential development includes more variety of housing types (duplex, small multi-family, carriage houses, etc)



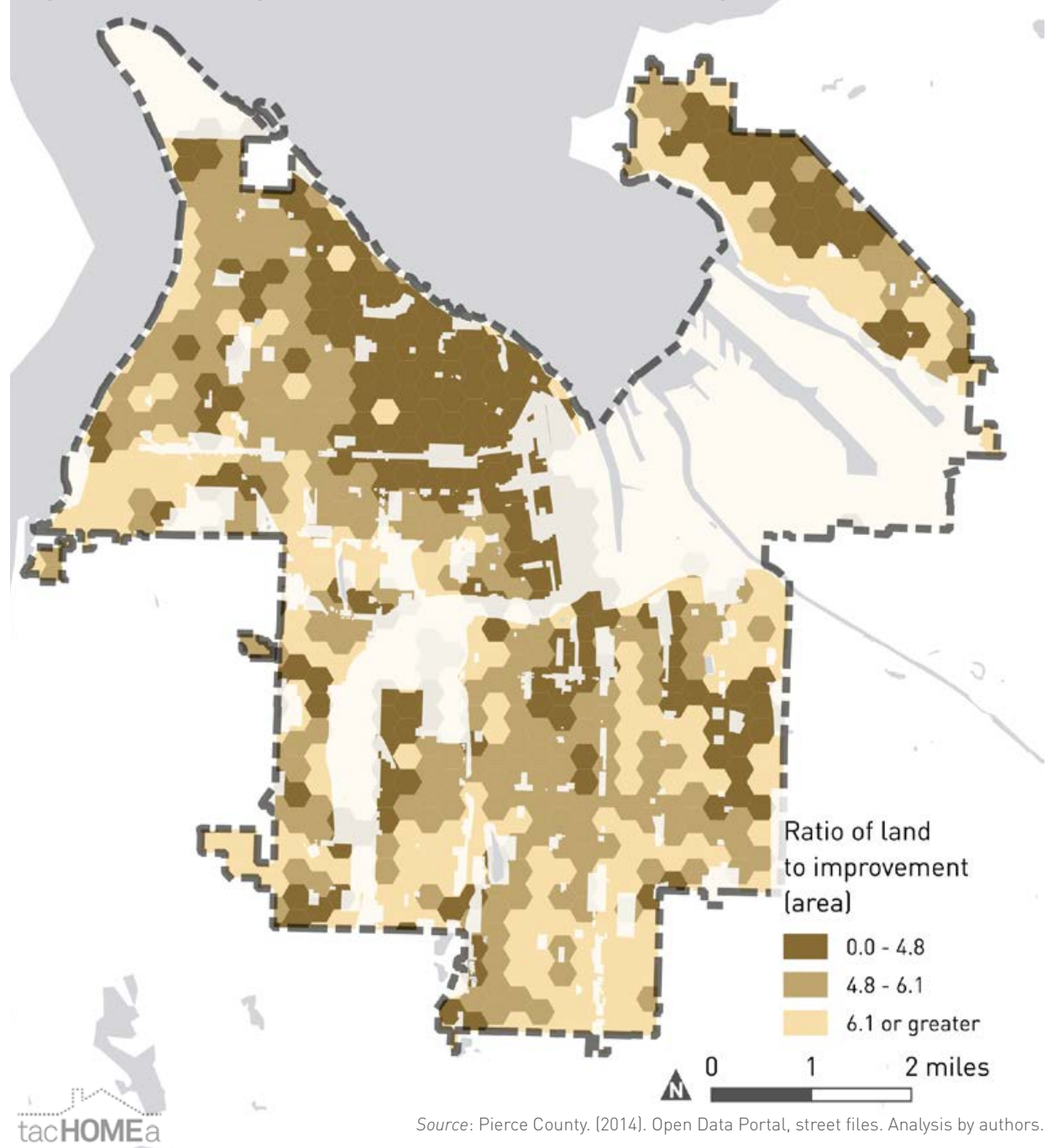
## INTENSITY OF LAND USE

Land-to-improvement (LTI) ratio is a measure of how intensely land is being used by development. It is calculated by dividing a parcel's land area by the total area of the improvements (structures) that occupy the parcel. It is different than lot coverage, which is the ratio of the area of building footprints to the total area of the lot. LTI is similar to floor-area ratio (FAR), however, all structures on the parcel are considered when calculating LTI. Here, only residential structures contribute to the LTI ratio.

Though the “era built” map can tell us much about the design of a neighborhood, some neighborhoods that were built in the same era exhibit very different land-use qualities. Darker areas are where land is more intensively developed (i.e., for a given lot, the residential structure is built up, or the footprint of a house takes up much of the lot). Lighter areas mean that either lots are larger or houses are smaller.

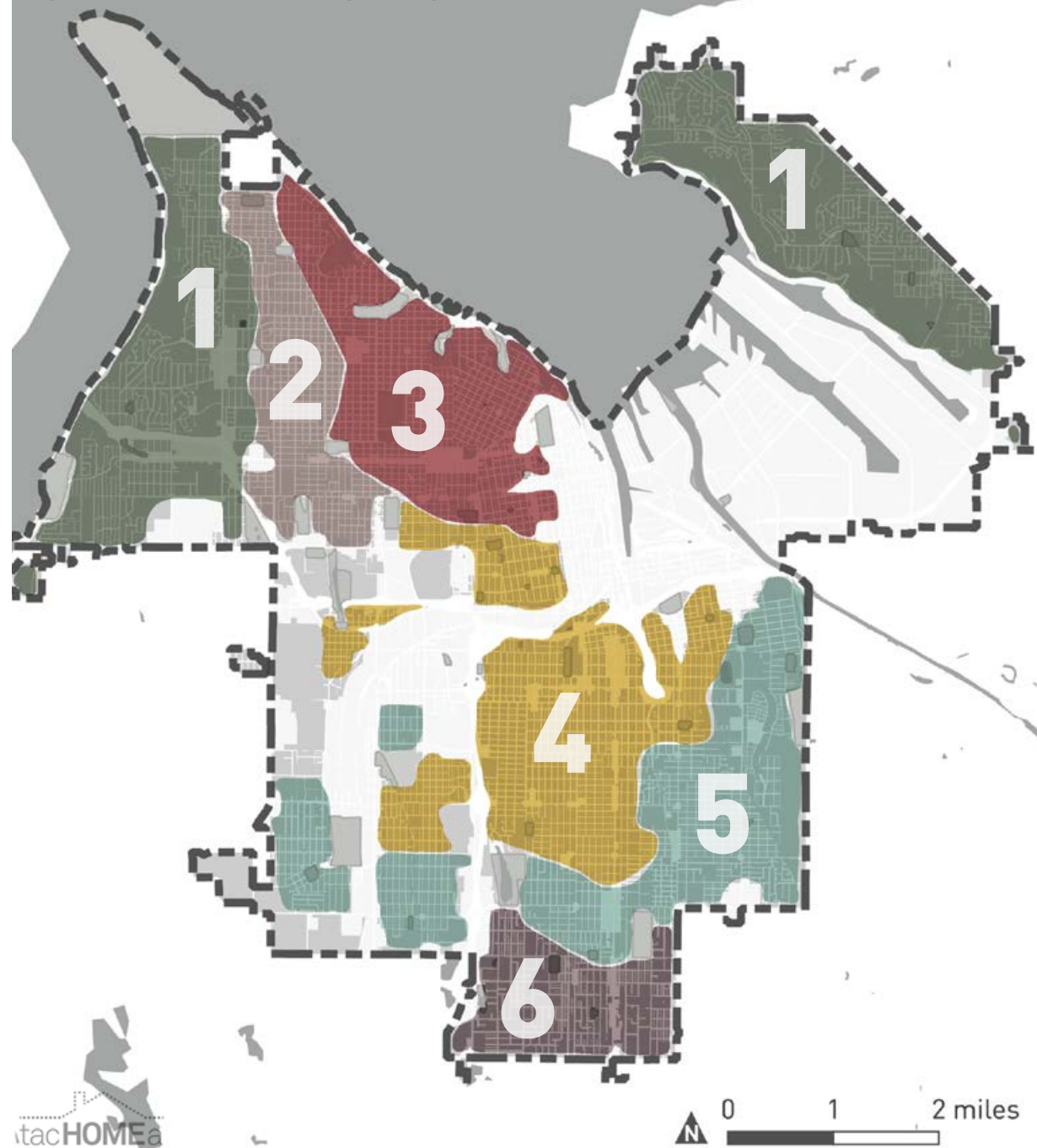
Conclusions about population or housing unit density cannot easily be made from this index, as LTI can only indicate the amount of development on a lot.

**Map 3.5: Land-to-improvement ratio for residential development, Tacoma, 2015.**



Source: Pierce County. (2014). Open Data Portal, street files. Analysis by authors.

Map 3.6: Residential development pattern areas, Tacoma, 2015.



# TACOMA'S SIX RESIDENTIAL PATTERN AREAS

By simplifying and overlaying the preceding five maps, our team identified the six pattern areas shown here. Each is described in the following six sections.

**1**

POST-WAR SLOPES

**2**

MIXED-ERA TRANSITION

**3**

PRE-WAR COMPACT

**4**

PRE-WAR EXPANSION

**5**

MID-CENTURY EXPANSION

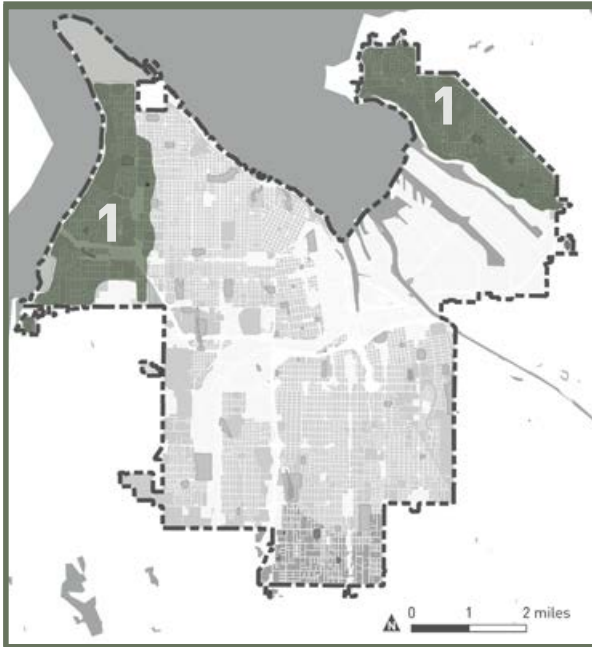
**6**

SUBURBAN FRINGE

# PATTERN AREA 1: POST-WAR SLOPES

## PATTERN 1 QUALITIES :

- TOPOGRAPHY: SLOPED
- BLOCK STRUCTURE: CURVILINEAR
- INTERSECTION DENSITY: DISCONNECTED
- ERA OF DEVELOPMENT: POST-WAR
- LAND USE: LOW INTENSITY



These discontinuous but very similar areas were primarily developed post-war and represent a societal shift that favored auto use and more insular neighborhoods. This is evidenced by the prominence of garages, curvilinear (curvy) streets and cul-de-sac development. This disrupted street grid limits walkability but lends itself to a sense of privacy and security within

neighborhoods. Houses tend to be ranch, double-ranch, or more contemporary building styles. They often have garages front-and-center, facing the street, as alleyways are rare. Many homes have long frontages and are 1-1.5 stories, as much of the area includes view overlays.

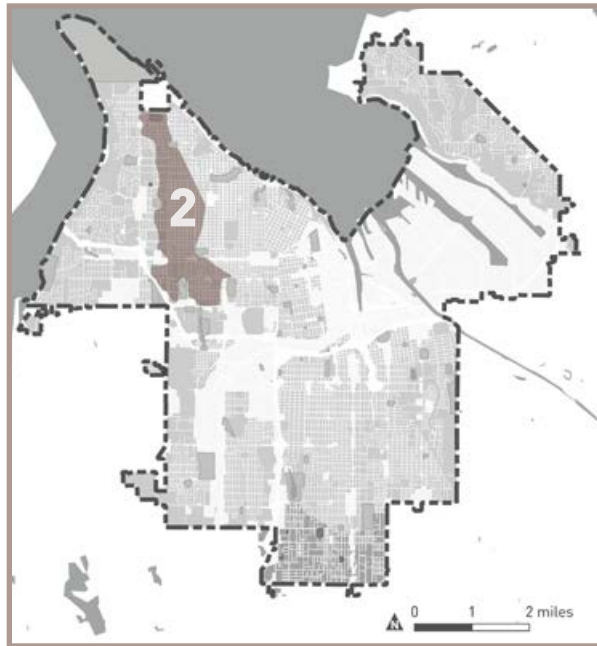




# PATTERN AREA 2: MIXED-ERA TRANSITION

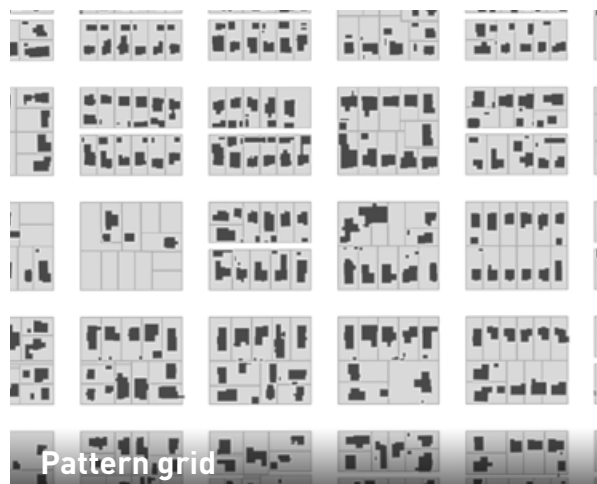
## PATTERN 2 QUALITIES:

- TOPOGRAPHY: FLAT
- BLOCK STRUCTURE: MIXED
- INTERSECTION DENSITY: CONNECTED
- ERA OF DEVELOPMENT: PRE-WAR
- LAND USE: MEDIUM INTENSITY



Though this area shares many street grid characteristics with Pattern 3, sidewalks are sometimes undeveloped. This area contains a generous mix of pre-war and post-war housing, including a fair number of mid-century homes, which tend to be more auto-oriented than pre-war. However, much of the area includes alleyways, meaning that homes often hide garages at the rear.

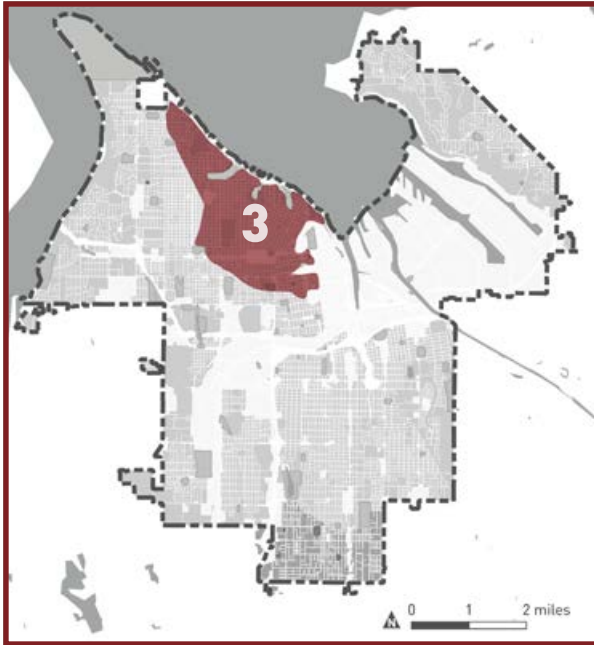
This area is slightly less compact than Pattern 3 and also holds far fewer large or land-use-intensive homes.



# PATTERN AREA 3: PRE-WAR COMPACT

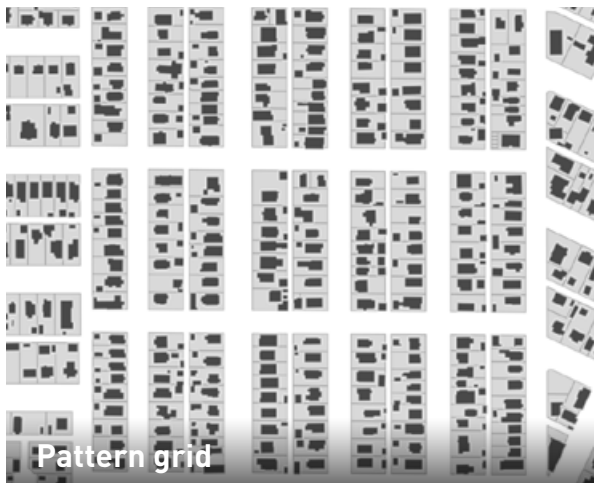
## PATTERN 3 QUALITIES:

- TOPOGRAPHY: **SLOPED**
- BLOCK STRUCTURE: **STRAIGHT**
- INTERSECTION DENSITY: **CONNECTED**
- ERA OF DEVELOPMENT: **PRE-WAR**
- LAND USE: **HIGH INTENSITY**



This is Tacoma's most historic section of residential development, containing homes from pre-1900 but ranging through the current era. The street grid is very connected and blocks tend to be fairly short, creating walkable neighborhoods. This area has a variety of pre-zoning, non-conforming lot sizes and lots of alleyways. There are many large

historic homes and a mix of non-residential uses blended within the area. A significant portion of this area is built on dramatic slopes, and home designs emphasize views of the Puget Sound.

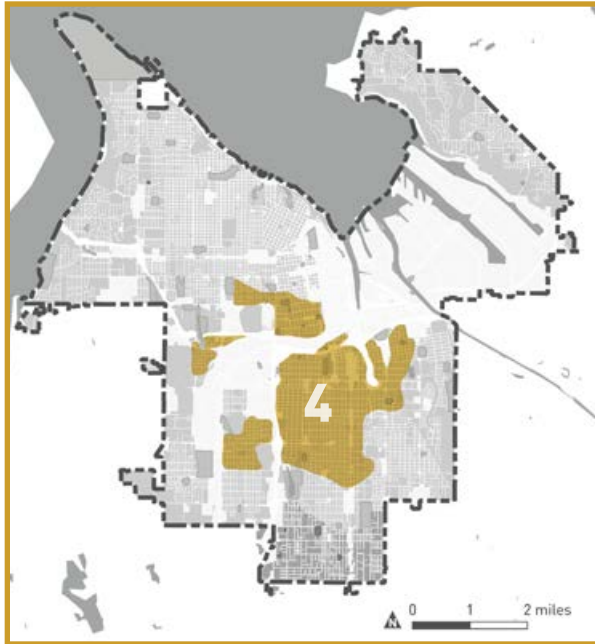




# PATTERN AREA 4: PRE-WAR EXPANSION

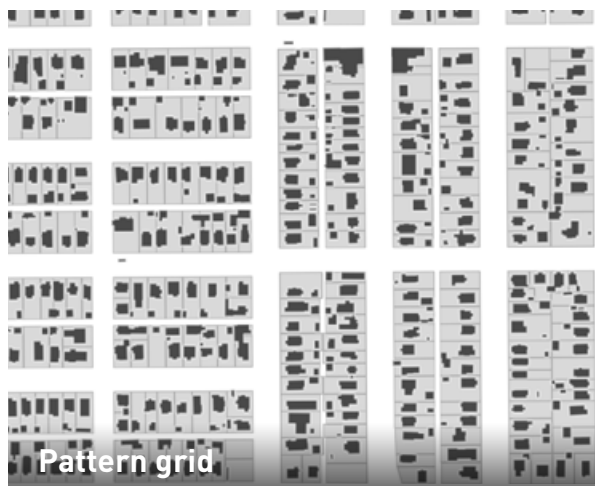
## PATTERN 4 QUALITIES:

- TOPOGRAPHY: **FLAT**
- BLOCK STRUCTURE: **STRAIGHT**
- INTERSECTION DENSITY: **MIXED**
- ERA OF DEVELOPMENT: **PRE-WAR**
- LAND USE: **MEDIUM INTENSITY**



This area contains a fair share of historic homes, though they are generally smaller than in Pattern 3. Homes in this area are primarily bungalow style or reference this type of modest residential design. Land is developed less intensely than in Pattern 3, and though neighborhoods are walkable within themselves, they tend to be discontinuous, as they are edged by large, busy thoroughfares. Blocks are slightly

longer than in other historic areas. This development is on fairly flat land, and the prominence of alleyways allows for hidden garages. Some neighborhoods also push power lines into alleyways, creating a fairly clear line of sight.

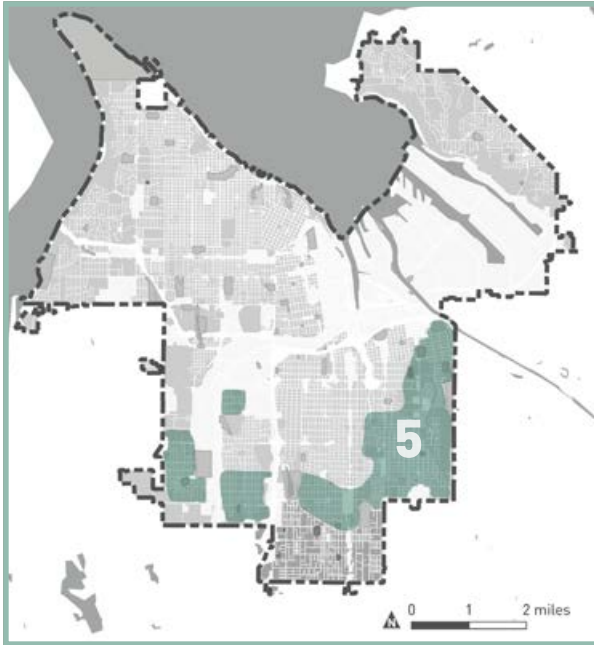




# PATTERN AREA 5: MID-CENTURY EXPANSION

## PATTERN 5 QUALITIES:

- TOPOGRAPHY: MIXED
- BLOCK STRUCTURE: STRAIGHT
- INTERSECTION DENSITY: MIXED
- ERA OF DEVELOPMENT: POST-WAR
- LAND USE: LOW INTENSITY



This area contains a general mix of residential styles, though mid-century homes are fairly common. These post-war homes frequently emphasize garages, and though alleyways exist throughout to some extent, they are less used than in other areas. The street grid begins to shift in this area, and blocks become longer in many places. Though this pattern area is made up of several

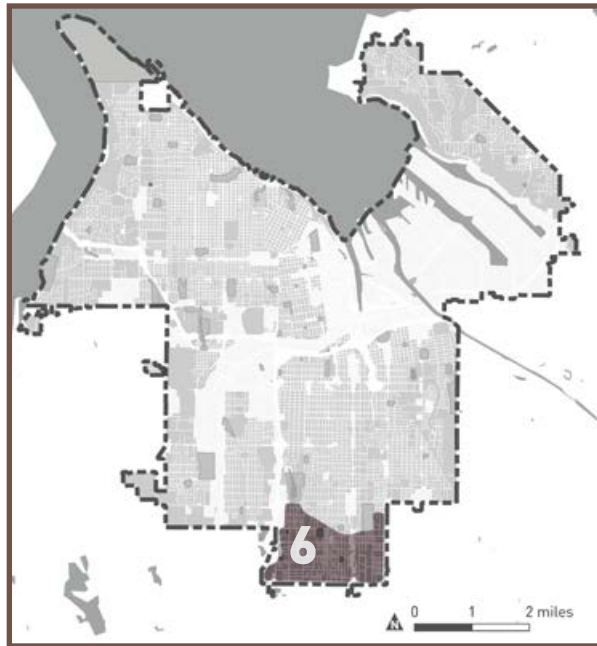
discontinuous sections, the “islands” of Pattern 5 maintain its characteristics throughout.



# PATTERN AREA 6: SUBURBAN FRINGE

## PATTERN 6 QUALITIES:

- TOPOGRAPHY: FLAT
- BLOCK STRUCTURE: STRAIGHT
- INTERSECTION DENSITY: DISCONNECTED
- ERA OF DEVELOPMENT: POST-WAR
- LAND USE: LOW INTENSITY



This area is comprised of a fairly disrupted street grid. In some cases, blocks are 3-4 times the size of those adjacent, and many times the size of blocks in compact historic areas. While there are some historic homes interspersed in this area, much of the development is post-war. Some residents have large, nearly-rural lots. Some blocks have been developed as PRDs (Planned

Residential Developments), with new, similar-looking, closely developed homes. This area has some flag lot and pipestem development to make use of space within extremely deep blocks. This area tends to be fairly auto-oriented due to its less-connected streets.



# LEARNING FROM PATTERNS

Arriving at these six distinct pattern areas highlights the differences across Tacoma's urban form. The methodology analyzed physical metrics that were pertinent to Tacoma, such as slopes and alleyways. The edges of these pattern areas remain relatively unspecified for a reason: whereas zoning lines are cut and dry, fuzzy edges represent the evolution of the built form across geography. Designing a methodology that employed a qualitative smoothing of quantitative analysis for distinguishing these areas reflects an appreciation for this evolution.

Pattern areas also reflect different passages of time in the landscape. The physical metrics used to assess this variability highlight how historical development influences the interplay of topography with street grid and land use intensity. The orientation of homes either towards or away from the street and the presence of garages reflect the era of homes. The product of highway and thoroughfare construction is shown in the more discontinuous neighborhoods of the Pre-War Expansion area. Inconsistent street connections and large lots in the

Suburban Fringe lend to the prevalence of new pipestem development, yet echoes its rural nature. The unplanned development in parts of the Post-War Slopes is revealed in its curvilinear block structure. These pattern areas help visualize changes across the landscape. This visualization is the first step towards deconstructing the "one-size-fits-all" approach of current development regulations.





CHAPTER 4

# DEFINING PATTERNS AS PLACES

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT  
TAKEAWAYS





Identifying values, concerns and perceptions helps calibrate physical patterns with neighborhood character while honoring the “human-historic” element of a place.

## WHY ENGAGE?

Community concerns over the direction of growth and development is one of the three guiding forces behind the purpose of this project. The process of observing, listening to and asking questions of the people who inhabit these places provides a framework for thinking about where and how to best guide infill development. Good infill development not only respects neighborhood form, but also contributes positively to neighborhood function. Engaging the community helps guide recommendations for promoting contextually sensitive design and access to middle housing, allowing us to:

- » Learn about the local context
- » Identify important neighborhood qualities

- » Understand perceptions and perspectives
- » Engage constructively about constraints and opportunities
- » Explore new ideas
- » Speak to shared values

## THE PROCESS

Our team designed a public outreach and community engagement process to gather input from a wide range of key stakeholders, including city staff, planning experts, property owners, developers, community leaders, and Tacoma residents. Three main methods of outreach were conducted: an online survey, expert/stakeholder interviews and neighborhood walking tours. These activities were supplemented by public presentations, open houses events for the Comprehensive Plan and ongoing discussion with Tacoma’s planning staff. Appendix C details the process, methods and populations reached.

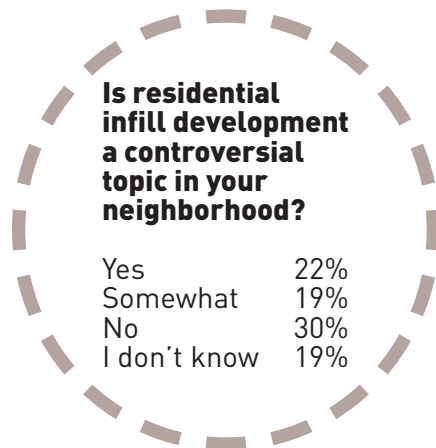
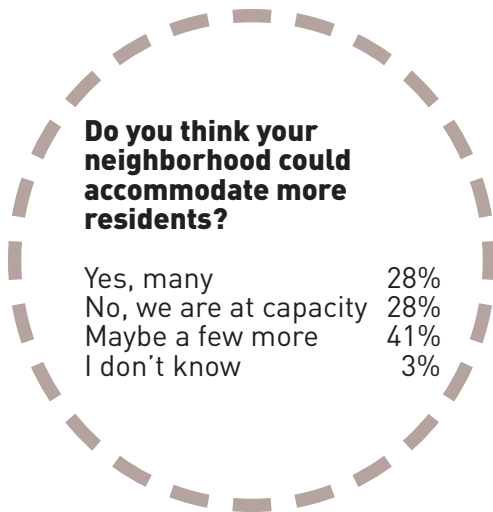
## PROMOTING PLACEMAKING THROUGH ENGAGEMENT

Issues surrounding residential infill development are place-based. Placemaking strategies are an effective way to guide growth so that it enhances what is valued and contributes to the creation of community assets. The city’s efforts to move away from the uniform zoning approach highlights the emphasis on promoting policies that are contextually driven, adaptive and inclusive. These types of strategies facilitate creative solutions rather than blanket solutions. The community engagement efforts started by this project helps set the groundwork for future collaborative processes that are essential to placemaking.

### What is placemaking? <sup>1</sup>

*Placemaking is a multi-faceted approach to the planning, design and management of public spaces. Placemaking capitalizes on a local community’s assets, inspiration, and potential, with the intention of creating public spaces that promote people’s health, happiness and wellbeing.*

<b>Nearly 400 people were reached through this project:</b>	
<b>339</b> survey respondents from Tacoma	
<b>25</b> walking tour attendees	
<b>6</b> key informant interviews	



# TAKEAWAYS

The information gleaned from survey data, interviews and conversations provides considerable opportunities for understanding community concerns and assessing the challenges and opportunities of residential development. Analysis of this information further identifies the differences between pattern areas regarding design preferences, development priorities and the perception of neighborhood qualities.

## OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

While opinions regarding neighborhood compatibility vary widely, issues of scale, look and function drive the concern over infill development. Some revealed tensions include a “homeowner versus renter” mentality, highlighting a perception that renters have different priorities and lifestyles or don’t have the commitment to maintain their property. Another tension arises from the

association of large apartment complexes with more noise, graffiti and trash.

As controversial as the topic can be, conversations with the community indicate that “duplexing the neighborhood” and the perceived impacts of traffic and noise were embedded within issues of deteriorating infrastructure, residential blight and distrust towards public service providers. When asked whether residential infill development is a controversial topic in the neighborhood, responses were varied. This supports the understanding that development-related concerns can be caught up in other contextual issues just as much as they can stand alone. When asked about the neighborhood capacity for new residents, responses were also varied. However, the inclination towards the capacity for “maybe a few more” residents suggests that there is opportunity for meaningful discussion about where and what kind of housing development occurs.

**“It takes initiative and courage to move the needle...we must never forget that as we target the character of the houses, sidewalks, alleys, etc., the human resources that will inhabit these homes has to be an integral part of the process. Never lose the human-historic [element].”**

- Attendee, Hilltop neighborhood walking tour



Overall, the sentiments shared with our team reveal an overarching commitment to supporting improvements in their communities. Walking tours highlighted this sense of neighborhood pride and provided the opportunity to have more focused conversations with local residents about the opportunities and challenges facing their community.

## REPORTING BACK: NEIGHBORHOOD WALKING TOURS

### HILLTOP NEIGHBORHOOD: PATTERNS 3 & 4

Much of the conversation around residential development emphasized the importance of the accountability of landlords (often referred to as “slumlords” on the walk) and general maintenance of housing. It was often pointed out that attendees did not care so much about the style of a house or number of units, but more that proper maintenance was an essential piece in keeping the neighborhood looking nice. Many people stated approval of ADUs, though when asked to picture them on the alleyway, it was noted that every house with an ADU would be a bit much. People showed strong preferences toward houses that had porches, and attendees emphasized that activity in the front yard is a major component of getting to know the neighbors and feeling safe and welcome in the neighborhood.

## SNAPSHOT OF THE HILLTOP NEIGHBORHOOD: INTERVIEW WITH BRADLEY KILLIAN (PRESIDENT) AND ELIZABETH LEONTINE (SECRETARY)—HILLTOP ACTION COALITION<sup>2</sup>

Discussion centered around the varied ongoing work of Hilltop Action Coalition (HAC) and their specific concerns around housing the existing community as changes occur in the neighborhood. The values of the neighborhood stem from its history as not only a historically black neighborhood, but one that has been a melting pot for and welcoming to all kinds of cultures: Jewish, Italian, Swedish, and others. The neighborhood has supported long-standing local businesses, though there are now major hurdles to opening these, and some existing businesses are floundering. There is serious concern over Key Bank leaving the area. Over time, HAC has seen major shifts in neighborhood dynamics. Supposedly felons are “dumped” on Hilltop, and there are some bad blocks concerning gang and drug activity, but many people are connected through “block leaders” and general friendliness amongst neighbors.

There are serious issues with some notable absentee landlords in the area,

which makes the neighborhood look worse than it is. These landlords are known for having many code compliance complaints and claiming that fixing the housing would cause tenant’s rent to rise, resulting in substandard living conditions. HAC mentioned that there is major concern over the quality of materials of new housing, as landlords and homeowners need to be able to maintain housing into the future and mitigate the cost of repairs. HAC brokers landlord-tenant agreements when necessary.

There is interest in the neighborhood for developing a group home for widows as one solution to concerns over aging in place. They noted that the new “affordable” housing in the area has been \$250,000 condos, which does not serve the interests of those who currently live there. The Hilltop is a place that is currently accessible to first-time home buyers, and HAC hopes that it will remain that way, but also maintain a resident base of those who have been in the area and contributed to the community for a long time.



## COMMUNITY CONCERNS

### CONCERN 1. SCALE

*When building height or bulk does not integrate into the existing streetscape and its prominence overtakes the sight line.*

"It's heart-breaking to think that the only development Tacoma can apparently attract is something on the disproportionate scale of the new building going up on 28th/Proctor that's so incompatible with the existing streetscape and neighborhood atmosphere."

"I think houses being expanded and remodeled so that they muscle their way to the edge of their lots is a much greater threat to the feel of the neighborhood than ADUs and small lots."

### CONCERN 2. FUNCTION

*When development fails to serve a variety of needs, or functions in a manner that is out of line with the character of the neighborhood.*

"Options for renting are either very nice, new and expensive units, or very run-down, cheaper units. It's difficult to find a reasonably priced apartment that relatively well taken-care of in a good neighborhood."

### CONCERN 3. DESIGN

*When bland or extreme architectural styles result in poorly placed windows, overly-prominent garages, or a disregard for privacy and landscaping.*

"There is a new house in my neighborhood [that] is too large [. . .]. While the garage is accessed from the alley it is connected to the home (on a corner lot), resulting in a huge driveway that you see from the street. The whole point of alley access (in theory) is that the garage isn't a major sight from the street. Also, there is no detailing on the side of the house . . ."

### CONCERN 4. QUALITY

*When construction materials are low-quality, or maintenance and upkeep costs result in abandoned properties.*

"The infill projects are either high rise apartments with no open space, or they are low-cost construction single family homes in which the development budget is consumed by infrastructure (sewer, water, permits, etc.) and little is left for quality construction."

"We need to resolve the issue of abandoned properties—residential & commercial. Vacant buildings do nothing to improve our communities."

### WEST END: PATTERN 1

Residents noted that though the curvilinear features of the western neighborhoods allow for a certain amount of privacy and safety (i.e. one way in and one way out; people generally know if you live there or not), in order to get somewhere that may be just a street over, a person may be required to find a long and circuitous route. The concept of attached accessory dwelling units (AADUs) was brought up by an attendee, who bought his house in the West Slope specifically because it was well-suited to a conversion. He intended to rent out the secondary unit to help pay his mortgage, and found this to be his best route for first-time homeownership. He had planned on looking for a duplex to purchase, but found them harder to find, and the AADU plan seemed to be doable because it would require only minor renovations.

### SOUTH END: PATTERN 4

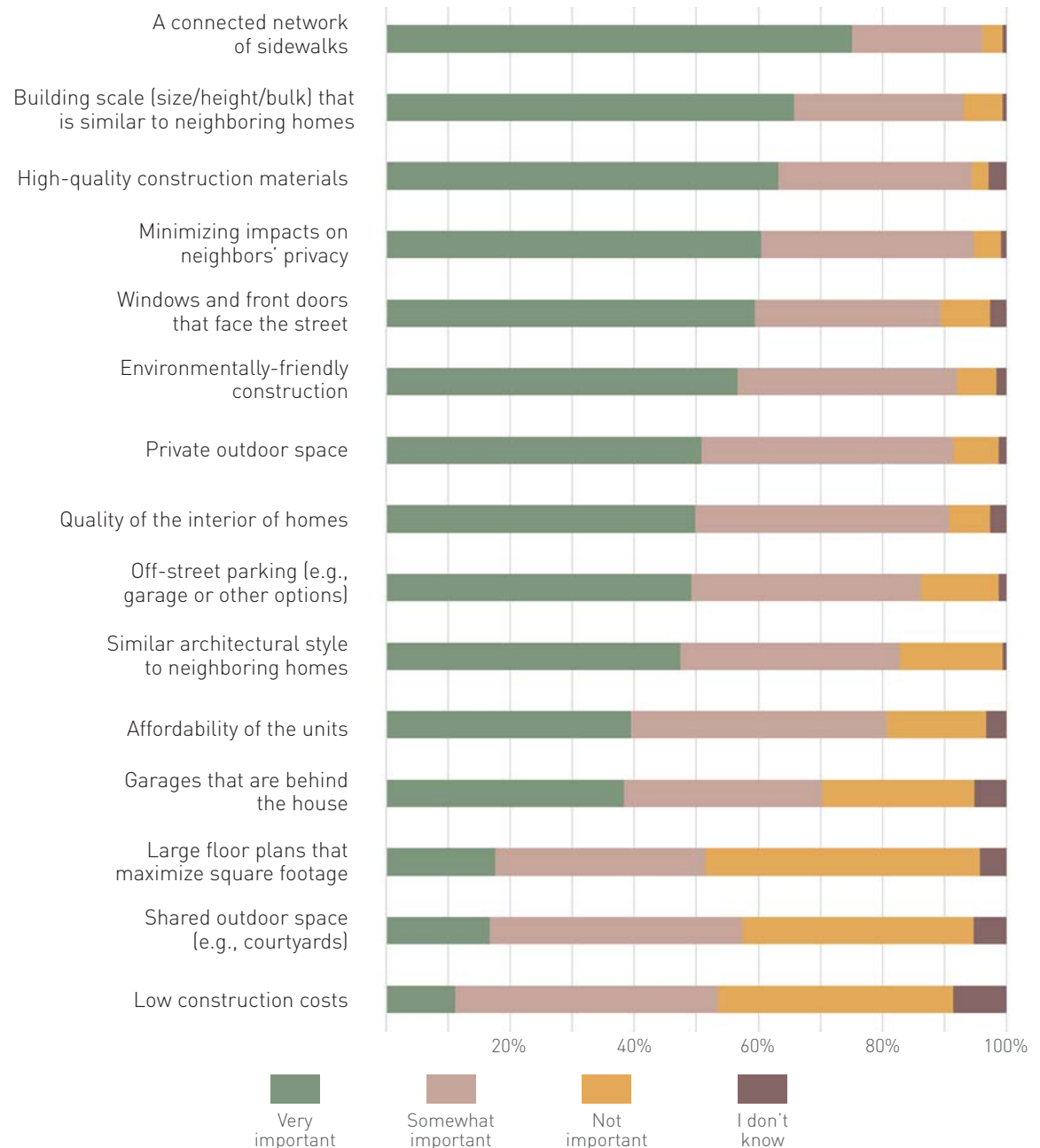
A major stop on the tour was in front of a 1990s infill house that was for sale. Attendees did not like this house and made many comments on its lack of windows and porch (which made it feel unwelcoming to neighbors), poor landscaping, poor use of alleyway (it had a gravel driveway out front despite a garage on the alley). Generally, attendees felt that this house was a

very bad example of infill. As a group, they were supportive of the concept of AADUs (someone suggested an incentive program for AADU conversions) or alley flats (accessory units accessed on an alley), as this area has many alleyways. One attendee noted that many of her neighbors were developing auxiliary units in their backyards, either for guests or work. They also noted that due to the power lines being in the alleyway, the area felt more open, which they liked. There was some conversation around how much development should be allowed on a lot in a neighborhood like this one, where land use is not very intense. There was some sense that some “affordable housing” in the area was overbuilt and stood out because of it, but that a standout component of that was its poor maintenance. People like living in this area, feel safe, like to walk there, and love the housing stock, but they feel that they must leave the neighborhood for shopping, entertainment, and food, as there are few of these places here.

## DEVELOPMENT AND DESIGN PRIORITIES

Recognizing that concerns about infill development are often embedded in other issues, housing design and development must balance and prioritize multiple competing objectives in order to be

**Table 4.1: How important are the following considerations when doing residential infill development in your neighborhood?**





contextually sensitive. However, the openness of community members to the idea of moderate development activity presents an opportunity to identify the design elements that lend to positive and palpable neighborhood additions.

Survey respondents were asked to identify the importance of factors that influence the design and construction of housing. The highest overall priority is in the surrounding built environment: providing a connected network of sidewalks. Building scale, in terms of size, height and bulk, was the next highest priority. Nearly half of survey respondents felt that low construction costs and maximizing square footage are the least important considerations.

The following pages show survey responses specific to pattern areas, which help us define the characteristics of each. Due to a low response rate in the Suburban Fringe, survey information from this pattern area is combined with the Mid-Century Expansion pattern area.

## DESIGN PREFERENCES

Through both the online survey and open house meetings for the Comprehensive Plan Update, community members were given the opportunity to consider images of different housing types and designs. Our visual preferences survey asked participants to **state the extent to which they thought the overall design of the house would be a positive or negative addition to the character of their neighborhood**. The intent of this activity is to understand if particular housing types and design characteristics are considered more desirable than others, and if those preferences varied by pattern area. Results help identify desirable design features and housing types that should be encouraged in future development.

Overall, participants' responses show that the greatest proportion of survey respondents preferred housing designs that depict the classic Craftsman bungalow style, with front porches, hidden garages and street-facing windows. Those designs with the least amount of support were garage-centric and skinny or attached homes, with little

architectural detail or landscaping. Of the images that depicted slightly higher lot densities, respondents favored cluster/cottage housing projects and courtyard townhouses over the more frequently built row houses.

When examining the geographic trends of design preferences, there are very few differences in the most well-liked images across pattern areas, with the top images for each pattern area showing a variety of housing types and densities.<sup>†</sup>

**The variety of housing types and densities presented in the top images indicates that negative reactions to infill development may be less about the perceived density of the unit on a lot, and more about poor architectural detailing and a lack of street orientation.**

Context-sensitive development is often a result of synergy between both form and function. However, this reinforces the fact that opportunity exists to support moderate increases in density if it can be supported by good design.

<sup>†</sup> Although a limitation of this conclusion is the uneven sample size of respondents across pattern areas, this is a common trend in visual preference surveys.

**VISUAL PREFERENCE SURVEY  
RESPONSES: HOUSES IN  
ORDER OF POPULARITY**  
number of units per lot listed adjacent

**most  
popular  
house**



2



1



2



2



2



4+



1



2



1



4+



1



2



2



1



1



3



4+



2



4+



4+



2



2



1



1



2



2



4+



2



2



2



1



2



3

**least  
popular  
house**



# PATTERN AREA 1: POST-WAR SLOPES

## WHAT ARE THE MOST IMPORTANT CONSIDERATIONS WHEN DOING RESIDENTIAL INFILL DEVELOPMENT IN YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD?

- 1ST** Building scale
- 2ND** Minimizing impacts on neighbors' privacy
- 3RD** Connected sidewalks

**WHAT THREE WORDS WOULD YOU USE TO DESCRIBE YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD?**

## WHAT ARE THE MOST COMMON PERCEPTIONS OF NEIGHBORHOOD FEATURES IN PATTERN 1?

- » I have places to walk to in my neighborhood.
- » There are trees in private yards in my neighborhood.
- » There are views of the sound, mountains or other natural features in my neighborhood.



## PATTERN AREA 2: MIXED-ERA TRANSITION

## WHAT ARE THE MOST IMPORTANT CONSIDERATIONS WHEN DOING RESIDENTIAL INFILL DEVELOPMENT IN YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD?

- |            |   |   |
|------------|---|---|
| <b>1ST</b> | <b>Minimizing impacts on neighbors' privacy</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» There are trees in private yards in my neighborhood.</li> </ul>  |
| <b>2ND</b> | <b>High quality construction materials</b>      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» I feel safe walking down the streets in my neighborhood</li> <li>» My neighborhood has adequate on-street and off-street parking.</li> </ul> |
| <b>3RD</b> | <b>Environmentally-friendly construction</b>    |   |

**WHAT THREE WORDS WOULD YOU USE TO DESCRIBE YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD?**

## WHAT ARE THE MOST COMMON PERCEPTIONS OF NEIGHBORHOOD FEATURES IN PATTERN 2?

- » There are trees in private yards in my neighborhood.
- » I feel safe walking down the streets in my neighborhood
- » My neighborhood has adequate on-street and off-street parking.





# PATTERN AREA 3: PRE-WAR COMPACT

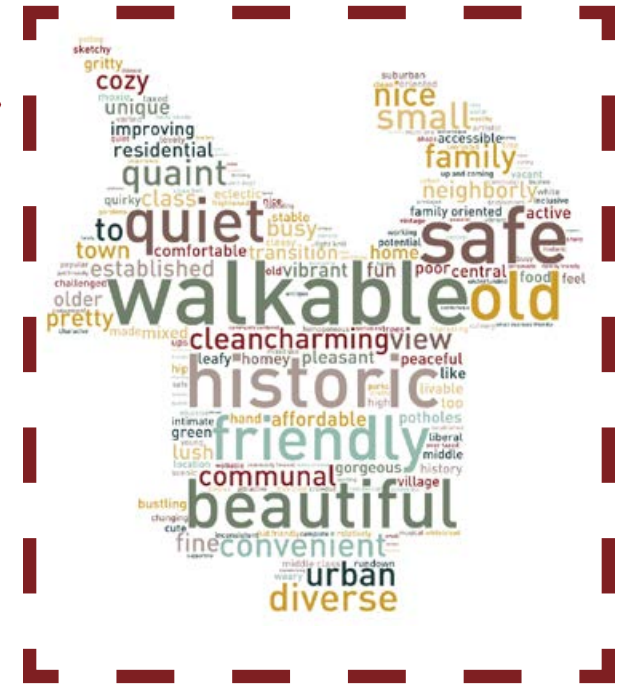
WHAT ARE THE MOST IMPORTANT CONSIDERATIONS WHEN DOING RESIDENTIAL INFILL DEVELOPMENT IN YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD?

- 1ST **Connected sidewalks**
- 2ND **Building scale**
- 3RD **High quality construction materials**

WHAT ARE THE MOST COMMON PERCEPTIONS OF NEIGHBORHOOD FEATURES IN PATTERN 3?

- » I have places to walk to in my neighborhood.
- » There are trees in private yards in my neighborhood.
- » I feel safe walking down the streets in my neighborhood.

WHAT THREE WORDS WOULD YOU USE TO DESCRIBE YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD?



# PATTERN AREA 4: PRE-WAR EXPANSION

WHAT ARE THE MOST IMPORTANT CONSIDERATIONS WHEN DOING RESIDENTIAL INFILL DEVELOPMENT IN YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD?

- 1ST **Connected sidewalks**
- 2ND **Minimizing impacts on neighbors' privacy**
- 3RD **High quality construction materials**

WHAT ARE THE MOST COMMON PERCEPTIONS OF NEIGHBORHOOD FEATURES IN PATTERN 4?

- » There are trees in private yards in my neighborhood, and they are primarily large and mature.
- » I have places to walk to in my neighborhood.
- » There are trees along the streets in my neighborhood.

WHAT THREE WORDS WOULD YOU USE TO DESCRIBE YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD?



# PATTERN AREAS 5 & 6: MID-CENTURY EXPANSION & SUBURBAN FRINGE

WHAT ARE THE MOST IMPORTANT CONSIDERATIONS WHEN DOING RESIDENTIAL INFILL DEVELOPMENT IN YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD?

- 1ST Off-street parking
- 2ND Minimizing impacts on neighbors' privacy
- 3RD Building scale

WHAT THREE WORDS WOULD YOU USE TO DESCRIBE YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD?

WHAT ARE THE MOST COMMON PERCEPTIONS OF NEIGHBORHOOD FEATURES IN PATTERNS 5 & 6?

- » There are trees in private yards in my neighborhood, and they are primarily large and mature.
- » I feel there is adequate green space in my neighborhood.
- » I feel safe walking down the streets in my neighborhood.



## ENGAGEMENT TAKEAWAYS

Engagement with the community revealed a strong sense of neighborhood pride and uncovered shared values and common themes. An emphasis on the friendly nature of these communities highlights how human interaction is an important element in shaping quality of life. This is supported by the overlap of considerations that are important in the development and design of a residential neighborhood. A network of connected sidewalks, the consideration

for privacy, compatible building scale and high-quality, green construction materials are key values shared across communities. This is further complemented by an appreciation of natural features and a walkable environment. Consideration of these interests is important for addressing community concerns related to infill development.

The process of identifying and defining shared interests can help shape code and policy changes that support good neighborhood design and development. The takeaways gleaned from these engagement efforts helps set the stage

for further defining the elements that make “great urban neighborhoods.” Whereas housing is a key component of a neighborhood, these communities are also a function of the quality and form of other features and activities. These efforts contribute to the promotion of placemaking strategies that work in tandem with the built environment patterns that make up Tacoma’s urban form.



## CHAPTER 5

# ACTION PLAN



In the previous chapter, we identified six distinct pattern areas based on a variety of built and natural features. As Tacoma plans for its targeted population growth, the identification of pattern areas offers a key opportunity to tailor future residential development in a way that takes into account these distinct features across the city. Tacoma has already taken key steps towards promoting housing choice through the identification of key housing goals in the Housing Element, but the pattern areas afford Tacoma the opportunity to employ context-sensitive strategies. To do this, the City will need to focus energy into code and programmatic changes that promote the expansion of housing options in all pattern areas.

## INFORMING RECOMMENDATIONS

Our recommendations for the City of Tacoma result from our assessment of existing social and physical conditions in the pattern areas, public feedback on housing types and key community concerns. This information provides the necessary background to meet project objectives and offer context-sensitive strategies for increasing missing middle residential infill development.

## REFINING AND RANKING RECOMMENDATIONS

The pages in this section are organized by the number of units of each type of suggested residential infill. Within these broad page outlines, we make further distinctions about the type of category where each strategy fits. Many of these categories will span across various sizes of residential infill development. The recommendations in this section primarily focus on making changes to the zoning code (categories A-D), however, there are several recommendations for non-zoning strategies (E-H). The eight categories we identified are listed below:

**A = accessory dwelling units**

**B = lot size, building envelope, density per acre**

**C = permitted uses**

**D = rezones**

**E = market signals**

**F = community investment**

**G = research & planning**

**H = design**

## RANKING RECOMMENDATIONS

To illustrate the impact of each strategy, we incorporate a ranking system that evaluates each strategy on its economic, social and environmental merits. The degree to which it meets these community needs will determine its composite score. The recommendations are ranked in each of these three categories on a scale of 1-3, low to high.

### ECONOMIC CRITERIA

Recommendations score highly if they allow for profit maximization and cost savings by developers that in turn helps spur development.

### SOCIAL CRITERIA

Recommendations score highly if they promote equal access to opportunities for a higher standard of living, community revitalization and housing security.

### ENVIRONMENTAL CRITERIA

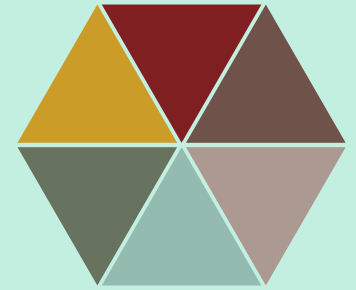
Recommendations score highly if they limit the consumption of natural resources, reduce pollution and help to protect existing environmental features through a combination of factors such as compact development, sustainable building practices, and transit-supportive population densities.

These three scores are compiled into a composite score totaling between 3 and 9.

## LINKING RECOMMENDATIONS TO PATTERN AREAS

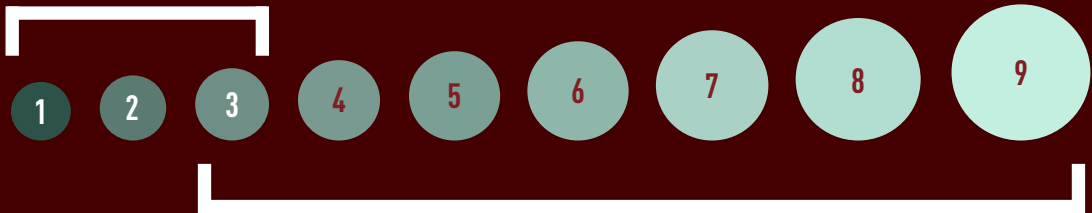
While many of the following recommendations are zoning code changes that will affect all pattern areas in Tacoma, some recommendations have language that ties specifically to the concept that development across Tacoma will look different in any given residential pattern area.

**This icon appears next to recommendations that include specifications for context-sensitive design and development.**



## SCORING RECOMMENDATIONS

### CRITERIA RATINGS



### RANGE OF COMPOSITE SCORES

## PROPOSED HOUSING ELEMENT GOALS FOR TACOMA'S 2015 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE

These icons appear next to recommendations that support the given housing goal's objectives.



TYPES &  
OPTIONS



EQUITABLE  
ACCESS



LOCATION &  
CONNECTION



AFFORDABILITY



HEALTH, SAFETY,  
EFFICIENCY

## **AFFORDABLE HOUSING POLICY ADVISORY GROUP (AHPAG)**

The Affordable Housing Policy Advisory Group (AHPAG) has been working with the City of Tacoma to formulate affordable housing strategies for the city since 2010. AHPAG was appointed by the City Council of Tacoma and is composed of nonprofit advocates, developers, architects, professors and other housing experts. This diverse group of representatives is responsible for reviewing affordable housing policies in Tacoma, identifying data needs to assist in planning for affordable housing, providing input to the City Council on their affordable housing policy strategies and developing policies in conjunction with Comprehensive Plan updates for Tacoma.

AHPAG is involved in all types of affordable housing policy but is primarily focused on implementing affordable housing strategies for the 80 percent of residential growth which is expected to occur in centers and corridors. The tachHOMEa project is focused on the 20 percent of growth projected for lower-density residential areas.

The recommendations in this report are meant to be complementary to the extensive work AHPAG has already done on issues of affordable housing, and the tachHOMEa team recommends adopting many of AHPAG's forward-thinking strategies for high-density housing in Tacoma.

## **COMPILING RECOMMENDATIONS PACKAGES**

In addition to a composite score, each recommendation is analyzed for implementation time frame (short, medium, long), relation to Housing Element goals and consideration for pattern area characteristics. Altogether, these four qualities allow us to weigh and prioritize recommendations for the City of Tacoma as they consider updates to zoning code and planning policy.

The recommendations are grouped in three packages, which represent three levels of expected effort necessary. The recommendations balance political and planning goals with resident and developer concerns, which range from issues of how visible new development is to how affordable it is to develop. Because of this complexity, strategies with high composite scores may not be in our packages for realistic immediate changes but more of a medium- to long-term plan.

These packages can be found following the Code and Programmatic Recommendations pages.



# CODE RECOMMENDATIONS

## SFD SINGLE-FAMILY DETACHED HOUSING

Many of the opportunities for new development in Tacoma exist on lots with existing single-family homes. Currently, adding a second detached unit to a residential lot is allowed only in R-3, R-4-L, R-4 and R-5 zones, which exist minimally throughout the city and often on lots where the addition of a second detached structure is unfeasible. Adding an additional attached unit is allowed in all residential zones but is underutilized. Options for converting existing rooms in single-family homes to junior accessory dwelling units (JADU) do not exist.



**Promote existing code that allows attached accessory dwelling unit (AADU) conversion.** AADUs make use of existing housing stock to add units and make homeownership a more economically feasible option. They are not often visible to the street, maintaining pattern continuity.

1

economic

+

3

social

+

3

environmental

=

7

COMPOSITE

**SHORT**  
time frame



**Change code to allow junior accessory dwelling units (JADU) conversion.** JADUs are similar to AADUs but do not require a separate exterior entrance, bathroom or kitchen. JADUs make use of existing housing stock to add countable units to the affordable housing stock. Conversion requires only modest investment and no parking requirements. They make homeownership more economically feasible. JADUs are not visible to the street, maintaining pattern continuity.

1

economic

+

3

social

+

3

environmental

=

7

COMPOSITE

**SHORT**  
time frame



**Expand detached accessory dwelling unit (DADU) permitting to all R zones.** Currently, DADUs are only allowed in R-3, R-4-L, R-4 and R-5 zones. Given their diminutive size and functions, DADUs are more appropriate in lower density residential zones. They offer an excellent way for neighborhoods to add units without a visible change to the streetscape and in patterns where alleyways are prevalent, primary access can be at the back of a lot.

2

economic

+

2

social

+

3

environmental

=

7

COMPOSITE

**MEDIUM**  
time frame





**Allow for lot size averaging.** This allows a home to be built on a small lot if an existing adjacent home on a large lot is retained and maximum square footage requirements are met when averaging the two structures. In patterns with more historic development, lot size averaging will be consistent with the variety of nonconforming lot sizes.

3

economic

+

1

social

+

2

environmental

=

6

COMPOSITE

**SHORT**  
time frame



**Modify planned unit development (PRD) requirements to allow developers to produce more units on their developable land in exchange for smaller unit sizes or other economic trade-offs.** Provide PRD design guidelines that are specific to overarching pattern area.

3

economic

+

2

social

+

3

environmental

=

8

COMPOSITE

**MEDIUM**  
time frame



**Change lot size minimum standards to allow for more flexibility in development.** Reduce minimum lot size for single family homes in R-2, R-2SRD, HMR-SRD, and R-3 to better reflect the historic variability within each of these zones. Complement these changes with setback or height adjustments that take into account pattern area qualities—i.e. in Pattern 3, side setbacks could be smaller so long as open space is preserved on other parts of lot; in Pattern 1, lots may be smaller, but should not allow full 35' height. According to survey design preferences, “skinny houses” should be developed with a garage behind, on alley, or not at all. This may entail only allowing skinny lots in particular pattern areas.

2

economic

+

1

social

+

2

environmental

=

5

COMPOSITE

**SHORT**  
time frame



# RECOMMENDATIONS IN PRACTICE

## SFD SINGLE-FAMILY DETACHED HOUSING

Residential lots with single-family detached houses have great potential to absorb a variety of types of residential infill development. These lots often exist in low-density neighborhoods and have the potential to use land more efficiently.

### ADVANTAGES OF THESE HOUSING OPTIONS:

- » The majority of residential zones in Tacoma feature low-density, detached housing. Infill strategies that target these large areas will have a high impact.
- » These strategies promote housing types that are similar in scale to the surrounding neighborhood, while still promoting new housing options. For example, a detached structure in a backyard is typically not visible from the street.
- » High mortgage payments are a large barrier to homeownership for low- to medium-income families. Rental income from an additional residential unit on the property can make homeownership dreams a reality.

### HOW:

- » Allowing developers to maximize PRD layout with smaller unit sizes (Recommendation B3)
- » Allowing for the construction of an additional, low-profile detached residential structure (Recommendation A3)
- » Dividing large lots into two or more smaller lots or building on existing undersized lots; complementing with design features that de-emphasize garages (Recommendation B2)

This "skinny house" uses its lot well.



This PRD allows for creative use of space and small units.



ADUs can be very low profile.



# CODE RECOMMENDATIONS

## 2-3 DUPLEXES AND TRIPLEXES

Duplexes and triplexes are great options for increasing the “missing middle.” Currently, duplexes and triplexes are only allowed as conditional uses in SRD zones and by right in R-3, R-4-L, R-4, and RCX; zones which are minimally used across the city. Conditional use language for R-2SRD and HMR-SRD require proof that a single family home could not otherwise be feasibly developed on the lot in question, which is very limiting. Internal conversions of large homes into several units are uncommon due to this strict language.

C1

**Refine SRD conditional use language to prefer, rather than discourage, development of and internal conversion to duplexes and triplexes** (remove or rewrite TMC 13.06.640.E.c-d).



**SHORT**  
time frame



**Allow duplexes and triplexes by right in HMR-SRD while simultaneously abolishing the R-2SRD zone.** Replace with R-3, as parameters within R-3 are effectively R-2SRD with by right duplexes and triplexes. Include specific design language that reflects design preferences for the pattern they're in.



**LONG**  
time frame



**Allow duplex and triplex as conditional use or just on corner lots in R-2 with design guidelines** that expressly allow one main front door per street frontage (options for multiple-entry behind front door, or disguised secondary entries) to mimic single family home design.



**SHORT**  
time frame





**Allow duplex and triplex as conditional use in R-1 with design language** that requires structure to mimic single family detached qualities of given pattern area, like single entry duplex (see Option H2 suggesting stock of plans for each area).

2

economic



2

social



2

environmental



6

COMPOSITE

**MEDIUM/  
LONG**  
time frame



**Change conditional use language to reflect smaller required square footage minimums** for internal conversions of single family homes to duplexes and triplexes.

2

economic



2

social



2

environmental



6

COMPOSITE

**SHORT**  
time frame



**Rezone R-2SRD to cover more of Patterns 2 and 3,** which are highly conducive to more compact development and already include a historic mix of housing types. An incremental process could start by adding R-2SRD as a buffer around higher density centers and corridors.

3

economic



3

social



3

environmental



9

COMPOSITE

**LONG**  
time frame



**Analyze lot size minimum requirements for duplexes and triplexes,** which are 6,000 and 9,000 respectively in zones R-2SRD, HMR-SRD, and R-3. These structures could reasonably accommodate two or three smaller (1000 sq ft) two-story units on far less lot square footage if designed well.

2

economic



2

social



2

environmental



6

COMPOSITE

**MEDIUM**  
time frame



# RECOMMENDATIONS IN PRACTICE

## 2-3 DUPLEXES AND TRIPLEXES

Duplex and triplex housing is under-supplied in Tacoma but was one of the most popular housing types among Tacoma residents on our visual preference survey. These also have great potential to fit in with the predominant single-family residential pattern.

### ADVANTAGES OF THESE HOUSING OPTIONS:

- » The bulk and building footprint of these housing types are similar to the surrounding neighborhood, while still promoting new housing options. Certain design features can help emphasize this compatibility, such as requiring a single-entry front door and a front porch oriented to the street.
- » They can offer floor plans that are more attainable to low- and medium-income residents.
- » High mortgage payments are a large barrier to homeownership for low- to medium-income families. Owning a duplex or triplex and renting the other unit(s) can make homeownership dreams a reality.

### HOW:

- » Designing to match historic home characteristics in a given area or single family detached qualities; i.e. a disguised double entry (access to both units behind one front door) or a second entry that is not as prominent as the first; Recommendations C2, C3, C4)

*All homes on this page are duplexes.*



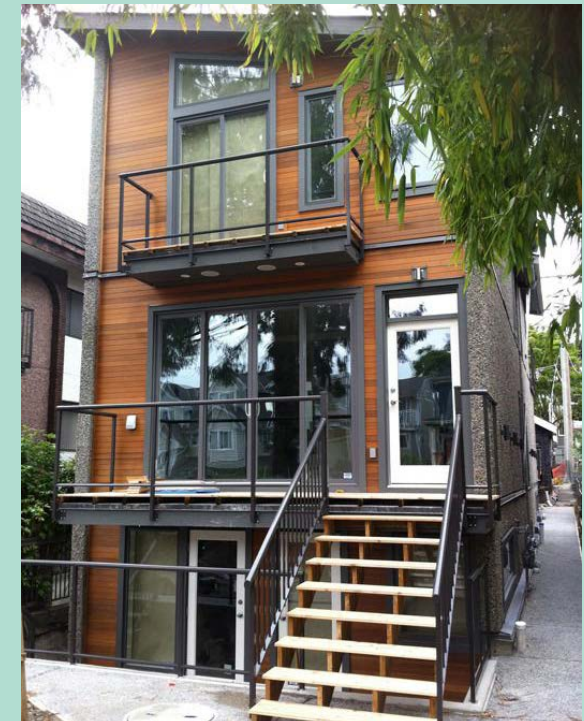
Duplexes which reflect surrounding architectural styles.



Double-entry (two doors to different units behind red door.)



Two front entries with one given less prominence.





# CODE RECOMMENDATIONS

## 4+ MULTI-FAMILY HOUSING

Currently, multi-family units (4+) are only allowed in areas zoned R-4-L, R-4 and R-5; zones which are minimally used across the city. Code language also encourages property owners in HMR-SRD zones to convert multi-family units into single-family units. It also defines multi-family as anything that is 4+ units, which includes a very large variety of building sizes. Minimum lot size and square footage requirements are often prohibitive of multi-family development.

B6

Change code language to specify “small multi-family” as 4-8 units rather than 4+ and allow “small multi-family” in R-3 and SRD zones. There are significant differences between a 4-8-unit building and a 50-unit building, but they are both treated as “multi-family dwellings” in the zoning code.



SHORT  
time frame



Eliminate language that encourages the conversion of existing multi-family units to single-family units in HMR-SRD zones. This can result in the loss of more affordable units that fit in well with the existing neighborhood fabric.



SHORT  
time frame



Allow cottage/cluster housing as a conditional use in all residential zones. Develop conditional use permit language that encourages this development when well-designed to fit the given pattern area.



MEDIUM  
time frame





**Make internal conversions from single-family to multi-family units a conditional use in all zones** (TMC 13.06.640). This allows for new units while preserving architectural styles within a neighborhood. This policy will be most applicable in areas with larger homes that could reasonably be converted into 4 or more small units. Provide minimum square footages that mirror those of small apartments.

2

economic

+

2

social

+

2

environmental

=

6

COMPOSITE

**MEDIUM**  
time frame



B9

**Allow for density transfers in residential zones that allow any multi-family** (R-2SRD, HMR-SRD, R-3 and denser). In lower density zones, calculate transferable density in terms of dwelling units; in higher density zones, use FAR. Limit maximum increase in density to no more than 3 times the FAR or 100 percent of units as on the receiving site. This allows for more flexibility for PRDs, cottage housing, and use of small multi-family. It accounts for units lost in nearby projects that underutilized density.

3

economic

+

2

social

+

3

environmental

=

8

COMPOSITE

**LONG**  
time frame



D2

**Expand R-3 and R-2SRD zones and make small multi-family units conditional uses in both.** Both of these zones are underutilized in Tacoma and would provide expanded access to middle housing.

3

economic

+

3

social

+

3

environmental

=

9

COMPOSITE

**LONG**  
time frame



# RECOMMENDATIONS IN PRACTICE

## 4+ MULTI-FAMILY HOUSING

Small multi-family units are unique for their ability to accommodate considerably larger numbers of people while still maintaining similar building size and footprint to houses in single-family neighborhoods.

### ADVANTAGES OF THESE HOUSING OPTIONS

- » The bulk and building footprint of these housing types are similar to the surrounding neighborhood.
- » These units often have shared courtyard or green space which can be an effective means for building connections and creating a sense of place.
- » Small multi-family units can offer floor plans that are more attainable to low- and medium-income residents, particularly those who cannot afford to buy a home.
- » Baby boomers have less need for homes with large floor plans. The internal conversion of these homes to 4+ unit “great houses” can provide needed income for homeowners during retirement.

### HOW

- » Allow for the construction of cottage cluster or courtyard housing on large lots (Recommendation B8)
- » Allow for the internal conversion of large single-family to multi-family homes (Recommendation B9)
- » Allow for density transfers within multi-family residential zones when space is sufficient (Recommendation B10)

Cottage housing is a great solution for larger than average lots in residential zones. This example uses a Pacific Northwest architectural style that matches the neighborhood. It also creates connected communities due to the prominence of its shared spaces.



5 units are hidden in this attractive historic home.



Courtyard apartments can be low-profile and attractive.





# PROGRAMMATIC RECOMMENDATIONS

## MARKET SIGNALS

Tacoma does not currently collect impact fees for residential development. Under RCW 82.02.020, impact fees must be based on a proportionate share of the costs to the systems required to provide service to the development. Generally, square footage is a major determinant of higher stress/load to a system, so charges are ideally scaled to reflect the desire to develop smaller, more efficient homes/units. Most cities already have impact fees, so developers expect them as a factor in their costs. Additionally, generic lot size standards do not reflect the variety of development patterns across the city.

### E1

**Introduce an impact fee system.** Use it to give incentives for building middle housing and use collected funds to finance necessary infrastructure and programs that support housing goals. Scale fees to consider actual impact on systems. Ensure that impact fees charged for residential development favor middle housing projects to similarly-sized single family development. Use collected funds to support development of infrastructure (Option E2), maintenance programs (Option F1) and library of stock plans (Option H3).



**LONG**  
time frame



### E2

**Rethink planned residential development infrastructure.** Use PRDs to increase connectivity of streets for walkability but emphasize the city's role in development of necessary infrastructure to increase livability for residents, rather than requiring developers to invest in it.



**LONG**  
time frame



# COMMUNITY INVESTMENT

Resident feedback from walking tours emphasized that many types of housing can “fit in” if they are well-tended. Enforcement of basic code violations are complicated when viewed from the standpoint of equity. Low-income homeowners struggling with upkeep can benefit from assistance, which helps maintain community pride. Renters in substandard housing are at the mercy of “slumlords,” who perpetuate inequitable living conditions. Ensuring that homeowners and renters can afford to stay in place is essential for preserving communities.



**Explore options for expanding city support of existing home maintenance programs.** Homeowners who struggle financially to maintain their home are at risk of an even greater financial burden when faced with code violation fines. Support of existing programs, rather than developing new ones, is an efficient way to support residents and enforce positive aspects of neighborhood character.



**SHORT**  
time frame



**Engage in further research into “slumlord” violations** (i.e. landlords with multiple properties and multiple code violations/complaints). Renters who live in properties managed by absentee, inattentive landlords may live in substandard housing conditions due to lack of maintenance. These “slumlords” have a tendency to increase rent when forced to pay code violation fines or do general maintenance, which could cause unexpected financial stress on tenants, leading to displacement. Assess political and economic feasibility of more stringent responses to violations with particular focus on tenant rights and security.



**SHORT**  
time frame



**Conduct a gentrification and displacement assessment plan.** Long-term residents deserve to stay in the communities they live in. With the potential for increased property values following development, the city should create a plan that assesses the risk of gentrification for vulnerable communities. This should happen as proactively as possible.



**SHORT**  
time frame



# RESEARCH & PLANNING

This report provides valuable new analyses of existing data for the City of Tacoma, but it also highlights the need for future research on these same topics. Additional research can help refine the pattern area tool created in this report. Research can also help to ensure the long-term effectiveness of residential infill development by planning for potential side effects (parking concerns) and investigating key issues such as placemaking, which can improve new development and enhance neighborhood character.

## G1

**Create a residential parking management strategy.** With more units in residential neighborhoods, parking may become an issue. Developing a strategy addressing potential conflicts will help ensure perpetuity of middle housing options, which are generally too small to make parking structures feasible and often require on-street parking.



**SHORT**  
time frame



## G2

**Incorporate pattern areas into the Comprehensive Plan.** Several chapters of the Comprehensive Plan (Urban Form, Housing, etc.) could link to pattern areas for a more nuanced approach to city goals and policies. Place emphasis on planning for improvements to qualities that residents identified as deficient through the tacHOMEa survey.



**SHORT**  
time frame



**Develop a neighborhood placemaking strategy.** Continue exploration of “character” in pattern areas. This will promote placemaking and create collaborative engagement opportunities for further planning efforts. Place special emphasis on engaging pattern areas that were underrepresented in tacHOMEa survey. Partner with the Neighborhood and Community Services Department.



**MEDIUM**  
time frame





# DESIGN

Survey results show that residents care less about number of units in a residential property and more about the design qualities. Though results sometimes favor duplexes and triplexes that are designed to mimic the look of single-family homes, there are also ways to design middle housing with its own unique look that is a positive addition to a given neighborhood. Though design review is one way to achieve context-sensitive design, there are other tools to help promote and ensure homes that “fit in.”



## Produce pattern area outreach and audit for developers.

Create education materials explaining each pattern area's characteristics and community design preferences for developers, available at permitting counter. Couple this handout with a simple follow-up audit that collects information confirming the developer's understanding of context of the pattern(s) in which they are seeking permits and an overview of their design process. This audit can serve as public record in the case that neighbors react negatively to the development.



**SHORT**  
time frame



**Develop a library of permit-ready house plans for duplex, triplex, small multi-family, and detached ADUs for homebuilders specific to pattern areas** that reflect design qualities preferred in each area. This could be accomplished through design competitions for professionals, partnerships with architecture education programs or contracts with architecture firms. Fast-track permitting for home builders who use these plans.



**MEDIUM**  
time frame



**Explore opportunities for adding discretionary review to low density residential development.** Design review is rare for residential development below apartment building size. The level of involvement needed by permitting staff and the impediment it may cause to resource-constrained small-time homebuilders is limiting. However, small multi-family as defined in Option B6 may be a starting point for this exploration to increase community acceptance of projects and available housing units simultaneously.



**MEDIUM**  
time frame



# RECOMMENDATION PACKAGES

## PROGRAMS & PARTNERSHIPS

## INCENTIVES & SIGNALS

### LOW-HANGING FRUIT

- F1: Support existing home maintenance programs
- F2: Tackle “slumlord” violations
- F3: Conduct a gentrification risk assessment
- G2: Incorporate pattern areas into the Comprehensive Plan
- G3: Develop a placemaking strategy
- H1: Produce pattern area outreach and audit

- H2: Begin developing library of permit-ready plans

### COURAGE REQUIRED

PACKAGE  
1 + ...

- G1: Create a residential parking management strategy
- H3: Explore adding discretionary review to low-density residential development

- E1.1: Establish an impact fee system
- E2: Rethink planned residential development infrastructure

### ASPIRATIONAL

PACKAGE  
1 + 2 + ...

- E1.2: Tailor impact fee system to favor middle housing

## CODE CHANGES SINGLE-FAMILY DETACHED

## DUPLEX & TRIPLEX

## FOUR+ UNITS

### LOW-HANGING FRUIT

- A1:** Promote attached accessory dwelling unit conversion
- A2:** Allow junior accessory dwelling unit conversion
- B1:** Allow lot-size averaging
- B2:** Change lot size minimum standards and add pattern-specific height and setback parameters

- B4:** Allow smaller square footage minimums in conversions
- C1:** Refine SRD conditional use language to prefer duplex and triplex conversion
- C3:** Allow duplex and triplex in R-2 on corner lots or as conditional use

- B6:** Specify “small multi-family” as 4-8 units in R-3 and SRD zones
- C5:** Eliminate language that encourages conversion of multi-family units to single-family

### COURAGE REQUIRED

- A3:** Expand detached accessory dwelling unit permitting
- B3:** Modify planned residential development requirements to allow more units on developable land

- B5:** Decrease lot size requirements for duplexes and triplexes
- C2:** Allow duplexes and triplexes by right in HMR-SRD, abolish R-2SRD, replace with R-3
- C4:** Allow duplex and triplex as conditional use in R-1

- B7:** Allow cottage/cluster housing as conditional use
- B8:** Make single-family to multi-family conversions conditional use

### ASPIRATIONAL

- D1:** Rezone R-2SRD to cover more of Patterns 2 and 3

- B9:** Allow density transfers
- D2:** Expand R-3 and R-2SRD zones and make small multi-family conditional use



# ACTION PLAN: NEXT STEPS

This chapter illustrates that there are a variety of potential strategies to accomplish housing objectives. While they vary in their level of impact and feasibility, each strategy offers an opportunity to expand middle housing. Further, the city now has a tool to apply these middle housing strategies in context-sensitive ways based on pattern area characteristics. As Tacoma evaluates which of these recommendations to implement, the ranking system from this chapter can help inform where the city should target its resources.

Beyond the basic implementation of code changes or introduction of programmatic strategies, the city will need to factor in overarching strategies to ensure that changes have significant impacts.

## PROMOTION

Implementation may require substantial promotion to ensure success. Several recommendations focus on existing permitted uses that are currently underdeveloped across the city. For residents to become interested in any of these options, they need to be aware of them. For example, a person who is concerned

about their housing costs rarely consults zoning code to determine whether or not they could help pay their mortgage by hosting a rentable AADU; rather, they will consider moving into a more affordable home elsewhere. Emphasis on this promotional facet of strategies will make a significant difference in residents' ability to stay in place in the midst of financial and social changes to their personal situations and neighborhoods.

## INCENTIVES AND SIGNALS

Development costs are a major contributor to the likelihood of development of desired housing types. Some recommendations emphasize “right-sizing” the cost of residential development to more accurately reflect the long-term social costs and benefits of particular housing types. Ultimately, developers are dependent on “signals” from the city. If Tacoma shows that they prefer particular housing types and make those easier to develop, so long as data shows that people want to live in those types of housing, developers will respond accordingly.

## TANDEM STRATEGIES

Many recommendations are stand-alone strategies to increase middle housing. The effectiveness or impact of other strategies may depend on the adoption of related strategies. For example, Option B6 (Change code language to specify “small multi-family” as 4-8 units rather than 4+ and allow small multi-family in R-3 and SRD zones) is a highly-ranked recommendation. Given the limited nature of these zones in Tacoma, it is even more effective when implemented in tandem with Option D2 (Expand R-3 and R2-SRD zones and make small multi-family units conditional uses in both). The city must evaluate where it makes sense to implement strategies in tandem with other strategies in these packages, or with other city policies.



# CHAPTER 6

# VISION





Image via [www.razorsharpsinsights.blogspot.com](http://www.razorsharpsinsights.blogspot.com).

# REFLECTING ON THE tacHOMEa PROJECT

To help Tacoma update its Comprehensive Plan, this project addresses information gaps related to housing policy and lays the groundwork for citizen dialogue over the direction, quality and intensity of development in their neighborhoods.

The process began with an examination of the multiple, overlapping and competing issues that Tacoma is facing. Grappling with the scale of growth and development is a pervasive theme in planning efforts across most cities. Environmental pressures, a fluctuating economic landscape and greater social stratification requires a proactive—rather than reactive—planning approach. Recognizing the variety of issues on the table, this project focuses its efforts on housing policy, specifically related to expanding

housing options, as a means to promote healthy, resilient and connected communities.

The objectives laid out in this report focus on expanding middle housing and identifying the qualities that support context-sensitive development. The project approached these objectives by identifying physical patterns in the urban form and consulting with the community about the qualities that lend to their sense of place. The result is a tool that provides an analytical framework for guiding future work towards the incorporation of place-based needs and desires informed by the community. The recommendations laid out in this report identify policy and code changes that are both city-wide as well as pattern-specific. Their effectiveness will lie in a phasing strategy that implements these changes in tandem with one another.

## DO WE MEET OUR OBJECTIVES?

The objectives of this project reflect an interpretation of the issues presented to the tacHOMEa team, as well as an assessment of the city's housing goals and policies. Whereas increasing access to middle housing and promoting context-sensitive development can involve different types of efforts at various scales, this project synthesizes layers of information through pattern area connections, completing the critical first step towards meeting these objectives. This report equips the City of Tacoma with new information and analyses, which provides a framework for the city to accomplish housing goals.

## ONE PIECE OF THE PUZZLE

The City of Tacoma is undertaking a tremendous amount of work, both in the short-term through their Comprehensive Plan update process, and in the long-term through their 2040 Vision. This project is only one small part of a much larger picture. Further limitations imposed on the scope and depth of the project include data quality and access that support the quantitative analysis. While this document presents a significant amount of material, there

is ample opportunity to further refine methods and flesh out strategies.

## MOVING FORWARD

This report was created to help frame the opportunities for positive growth that exist in Tacoma, but is an opportunity in and of itself.

This study can be used to:

- » Apply the pattern areas study as an evaluation tool to assess the effectiveness of zoning, code and policy changes;
- » Convert the patterns area map into a zoning overlay;
- » Provide new language and content to the 2015 Comprehensive Plan Update;
- » Communicate key messages about growth management to the public;
- » Standardize the link between sustainable housing and affordable housing by integrating community support for green building practices and high-quality construction materials as a means to retain affordability through low energy costs;
- » Help advocate for the adoption of AHPAG's recommendations to promote affordability and choice in every neighborhood, including their centers

and corridors;

- » Develop a project framework for defining the "great urban neighborhood" concept;
- » Carry forward the results of community engagement work by developing further outreach materials.

Moving forward, Tacoma's government and elected officials can choose how to capitalize on this groundwork to inform its efforts and proceed with the next steps of addressing critical growth issues.

## FINAL THOUGHTS FACING THE FEAR OF CHANGE

Change is inevitable but often feared. What constitutes "good" change, versus "bad" change, is a value-laden, contextual question that is subject to competing schools of thought. Viewpoints and priorities that can be systematically influenced by a host of demographic factors and politics. This can make conversations about growth and development difficult, particularly in regards to the effect of density increases on neighborhood identity and design. Whether it is a perception or a reality, these changes can feel threatening to neighborhood residents.



## TACOMA ON THE VERGE

Tacoma is on the precipice of major population growth and changes in the employment landscape. New regional transit investments will spur changes to location preferences of homes and workplaces. Extreme weather events in other parts of the country may increase the desirability of the Pacific Northwest, regardless of the region's own environmental threats. Job growth in Seattle's advanced technology sector, in conjunction with job concentration in Tacoma's commercial shipping/manufacturing sector, is attracting a diverse and evolving workforce. Improvement in the overall quality of life is partly due to economic gains, but these gains are often felt disproportionately by different socioeconomic groups. These trends are further compounded by broader demographic trends, defined by the growing generational gap between baby boomers and millennials, and the subsequent shifts in societal preferences and values.

## CULTIVATING THE MESSY

Recognizing these forces, Tacoma's neighborhoods must continue to cultivate healthy, resilient and connected communities. This will involve accommodating growth through several strategies, one of which is supporting infill development in residential areas. Accommodating infill

lends to the development of a variety of housing options that can smooth the transition between high-density centers and corridors and low-density residential areas. A greater use of alleyways and lots can even improve, rather than detract from, curb appeal. For example, in the Pre-War Compact pattern area, a neighborhood like the North End is a typically desirable area of Tacoma. However, it also sees the greatest variety of homes and the most compact land uses, lending to an inherent "messiness" that some argue characterizes its appeal.

## DESIGN BEYOND AESTHETICS

Promoting the development of this transitory housing zone is more than just an exercise in aesthetics. It can have tremendous socio-economic benefits that to Tacoma's diverse and changing population. Policies and strategies that encourage innovative housing options and land use work to ensure that family generations can afford to grow and invest near each other, and have options for aging in place. A diversified housing stock supports the presence of affordable options in high-opportunity areas, from which low-income populations have historically been excluded. The compact development that stems from a greater variety of housing options in a greater variety of areas supports the kind of

density needed for increased accessibility through transit and safer, more walkable environments.

## CAVEATS AS OPPORTUNITIES

Finally, this report is not complete without recognizing some important nuances in the discussions that have guided this project:

- » Compatibility, reframed here as "context-sensitive development," is emphasized in housing policy and development. However, what does compatibility mean and to what extent should it be promoted? Often understood as design-oriented, it may not always be the desired outcome if it means continued support of the car-dominated development patterns prevalent in some of Tacoma's neighborhoods. Furthermore, if the "messiness" of the North End isn't necessarily a reflection of identical lot uses and similar architectural styles, an adherence to design compatibility would diminish the qualities that make the neighborhood unique. So, in the same way that neighborhoods have characteristics that go beyond the connectivity of their streets and the orientation of their buildings, housing has characteristics that go beyond just the architectural design of the unit. "Context-sensitive"

development helps frame this caveat so that it also emphasizes housing development that reflects compatibility with the city's economic, social, and environmental goals.

- » Affordability is easily dismissed as a high priority when foreclosures and median home values are lower than the regional average. Does this mean that Tacoma too affordable? Some may argue that the market for development is not competitive enough to start imposing impact fees, nor requiring provisions for affordable housing units in large developments. However, the experience of West Coast cities like San Francisco, Seattle and Portland, sets an example of the danger in passive affordable housing policy that is unable to adapt to a quickly-changing market and combat the subsequent effects of displacement and gentrification.

In the end, increasing access to middle housing and ensuring context-sensitive development is a process of balancing and prioritizing multiple competing objectives. It will require a thoughtful, proactive approach that is informed by diverse voices. The City of Tacoma is well-positioned to set this example.

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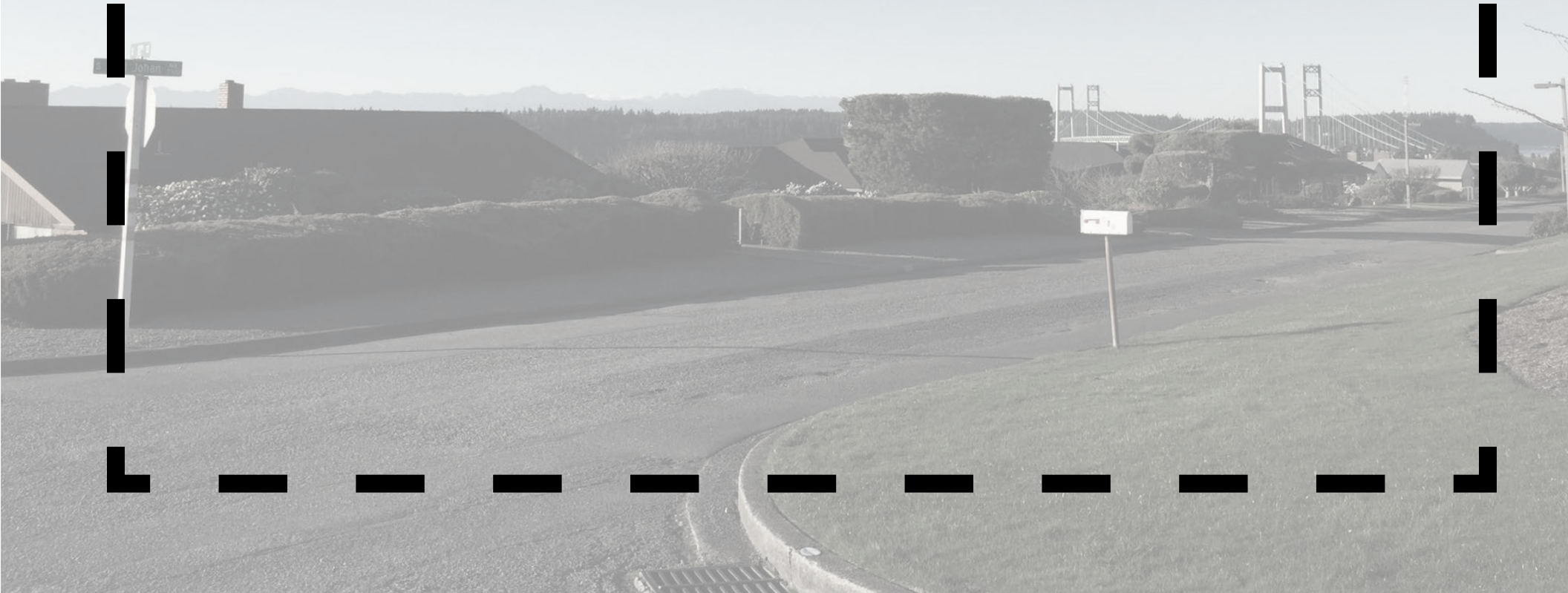
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# APPENDICES



# APPENDIX CONTENTS

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# **APPENDIX A: ANALYSIS OF TACOMA MUNICIPAL CODE**



# TACOMA'S MUNICIPAL CODE

While the City of Tacoma is interested in positive changes to the status quo that may allow for a diversity of housing types, the city strives to mediate development-related change through the Tacoma Municipal Code (TMC) as a way of meeting the perceived community desire for predictability.<sup>1</sup> This section covers the city's existing building code that plays into:

- » regulation of architectural and aesthetic compatibility of residential development;
- » regulations around density of units and people in residential areas; and
- » code that permits unconventional land use, allowing for more affordable dwelling development.

Tacoma has nine low- to medium-density residential zoning districts that comprise traditional neighborhood development patterns, discussed below.

## R-1

Intended for a “typical” single-family residential neighborhood. It is most appropriate in established areas with a relatively quiet and stable neighborhood environment. The R-1 district has low traffic volumes and larger lot sizes. R-1 may be subject to the View Sensitive Overlay district.

**R-1 covers 7.9% of land in Tacoma.**

## R-2

The most common residential zoning district in the city. This district is similar to the R-1 district, however its density is slightly higher than the R-1 district. It permits all uses allowed in the R-1 and may also allow for lodging uses limited to one guest room. It generally abuts more intense residential and commercial districts.

**R-2 covers 52.5% of land in Tacoma.**

## R-2SRD

Although similar to the R-2 district, it allows for a limited number of two and three-family dwellings, subject to an approved conditional use permit (“where the location, amount and quality of such development would be compatible with the single-family character of the

area and enhance the area’s overall quality”). Some pre-existing multi-family dwellings may also exist in this district. R-2SRD covers 3.3% of land in Tacoma.

## HMR-SRD

Designed to apply to existing neighborhood areas or portions of existing neighborhood areas which have been designated as a Historic Special Review District because the buildings within reflect significant aspects of Tacoma’s early history, architecture and culture. Single-family dwellings are the pre-dominant land use within the HMR-SRD district. Conversion of existing multiple-family uses to single-family uses will be encouraged but not required.

**HMR-SRD covers 0.7% of land in Tacoma.**

## R-3

Intended for one-, two-, and three-family dwellings. Some lodging and boarding homes are also appropriate. The R-3 district is characterized by low residential traffic volumes and generally abuts more intense residential and commercial districts. The setback requirements are the same as the R-2 district.

**R-3 covers 4.1% of land in Tacoma.**

## R-4-L

Intended for low-density multiple-family housing, retirement homes, and group living facilities. The R-4L district is very similar to the R-4 district, but has more restrictive site development standards which are intended to minimize adverse impacts of permitted and conditional uses on adjoining land.

**R-4-L covers 1.4% of land in Tacoma.**

## R-4

Intended for medium-density multiple-family housing. Other appropriate uses may include day care centers, and certain types of special needs housing. The R-4 district is located generally along major transportation corridors and between higher and lower intensity uses.

**R-4 covers 1.1% of land in Tacoma.**

## RCX

Primarily residential in nature, though commercial uses are allowed. Commercial uses are small and serve the immediate neighborhood. This is usually a transition area to single-family neighborhoods.

**RCX covers 1.8% of land in Tacoma.**

## NRX

Predominantly residential and discourages removal of single-family residential structures. This district encourages infill of appropriate size and design. This district is intended for areas which previously allowed denser residential uses and some neighborhood commercial uses.

**NRX covers .04% of land in Tacoma.**

Additionally, the City of Tacoma has several high-density residential districts:

- » **R-5:** intended for high-density multiple-family housing and also permits residential hotels, retirement homes, and limited mixed-use buildings;
- » **DR:** downtown residential;
- » Other mixed-use districts allow for high-density housing.

Within these districts, a variety of housing types are allowed. Table A.1 details the specifications of allowed uses relevant to this study. Most notably, small multi-family plexes are excluded from the R-1 and R-2 districts, relegating these units to districts that span far fewer square miles of Tacoma. Table A.2 explores select lot size and building envelope standards for uses of note. Tacoma has made progress recently in this venue by permitting smaller-than-minimum lot sizes in all residential zones, allowing for more development options. Table A.3

describes many of the Tacoma Municipal Code's specific regulations that work towards promoting the goals of residential compatibility, density or affordability. This list is not exhaustive, but it shows a broad overview of the major elements of code. Modification of these codes may be instrumental for balancing the city's objectives. The discussion below focuses on the pieces of code that are most influential to these goals.

## A NOTE ON DESIGN COMPATIBILITY

Cities commonly use land use code to regulate aesthetics. When building or modifying a dwelling, twenty-minute pre-application assistance meetings are available with subject matter experts (SMEs) at the city's permitting counter or over the phone. These meetings do not tend to cover aesthetic-related questions beyond minimum zoning requirements, as SMEs do not have the power to deny an application based solely upon its aesthetic appearance. "Compatibility" is a common term in the Tacoma Municipal Code, and it involves an immense amount of discretion. As discussed earlier, the definition of "compatibility" may range from strictly physical characteristics of dwellings to a connection between social goals and land use patterns.

Currently, Tacoma interprets “compatibility” to range from physical characteristics—like allowed setback and height—to a more nondescript requirement for duplexes and triplexes to “fit in” with single-family houses. While neighborhood and sub-area plans may make note of existing design features or desired architectural characteristics, these documents do not hold power over minimum zoning regulations; rather, they mostly give guidance to the rezoning of any part of that area should the need arise.

While strict regulation may keep the most offensive designs from becoming a built reality, overly specific design requirements may also limit the creative capacity of designers. Neighborhoods can benefit from having a diversity of both housing types and styles. Even historic districts can incorporate a mix of new architecture when design responds to surrounding development.

## A NOTE ON DENSITY

Greater density can be achieved through several patterns of development. In one, increased density happens through smaller lots, smaller houses and more houses within a given area, increasing the amount of land that is covered by buildings. In another scenario, more units are added to the existing land

use pattern without a visible change to the built environment; for example, a large single-family house is divided into several units. A healthy mix can be achieved through code that allows for smaller lots and houses, pipestem lots, more small multi-family (duplex, triplex, quadruplex), accessory dwelling units and other creative options. Tacoma has made strides in allowing for the development of small lots and pipestem or flag lots.

Additionally, Tacoma does allow for some development of accessory dwelling units (ADUs). Amendments to ADU regulation have been brought forward from the general public on several occasions that would extend detached ADUs to more residential districts. However, City Council maintains that the community does not want that sort of development, so these amendments have not been adopted.<sup>2</sup> Tacoma’s sentiment and regulations around ADUs is considered “typical” of municipalities. Generally, Tacoma prohibits detached ADUs in the most common residential zones, where larger lots are better suited to add a secondary structure. Size requirements also tend to be overly restrictive.

Allowing for a variety of housing types includes allowing for low-density, multi-family plex housing. These dwellings can be designed to match

single-family homes or have otherwise attractive facades, which the TMC suggests. However, this housing is not permitted in the most prevalent residential zones, and in R2-SRD and HMR-SRD, conditional-use permits are required for duplexes and triplexes. One of the requirements for a conditional use permit is demonstrating that “special circumstances exist on the site which make development or continuation of a single-family dwelling difficult.” Single-family dwellings are given preferential treatment in these zones, which may be contrary to goals of the Comprehensive Plan that call for greater density but also speak to the city’s policies of preserving single-family residential character. In addition, triplexes and larger are labeled “apartment houses” in TMC Title 2 (Buildings), which means that they require certain additional amenities, such as on-site laundry.<sup>3</sup> Accessibility requirements established in the Americans with Disabilities Act and Fair Housing Act are triggered at four or more units in a building, which is a federal standard. These requirements could make development more expensive and therefore less attractive.

Tacoma does not currently permit cottage or cluster housing in residential zones. In this housing type, a handful of small, single-family homes are developed on a large lot around a common green space.

This type of housing is presented as another option for increasing density in the City’s Affordable Housing Policy Advisory Group’s Policy Recommendations to the City Council from December 2010.

### A NOTE ON AFFORDABILITY

Code regulations directly impact housing affordability. The more cost-effective it is to build the unit, the less cost is passed on to the buyer. This means that any regulation that requires developers to commit more resources to a project will increase the cost of the completed home or discourage its development (i.e. the laundry machine requirement for triplexes, or requiring major infrastructure investment). Tacoma already has a decent amount of land use code that provides for development of non-standard lots, making development more attainable and cheaper; for example, pipestem development, decreased lot size standards, and variances for design requirements on oddly-shaped lots. Tacoma does not have impact fees, which makes development less expensive than in neighboring jurisdictions, but may limit the city’s ability to finance and maintain developer-built infrastructure.

In 2010, about 42,000 households in Tacoma were owner-occupied. Homeownership offers many benefits:

stability, tax benefits and equity (if value increases). Most first-time homebuyers are unable to jump directly into a very large, expensive house. Maintaining an adequate stock of “entry-level” homes is essential to affordability in the region. This means that the city may need to protect existing smaller, less-expensive homes—especially in areas close to neighborhood centers and downtown. This is especially important because these areas primed for the displacement of low-income communities, as seen in cities like Portland and Seattle]. While this may not happen through code, it can help achieve this by allowing small lots development. Additionally, regulation around design in historic areas can be essential for preserving valuable cultural relics, but maintenance of historic homes can be very expensive when code regulations require certain material standards, like replacing windows with wooden trim

instead of vinyl. If the city wants to keep people in place as population increases, retaining that neighborhood character which is so highly valued, it will need to ensure that existing homeowners have the ability to maintain their homes.

While homeownership may be an American ideal, many people do rent, whether by choice or necessity. Though much of the residential development in Tacoma in the next decades may be slated for neighborhood centers and corridors in high-density residential and mixed-use districts, many renters still wish to live in single-family neighborhoods and experience those neighborhoods the same way a homeowner is privileged to do so. While renters are sometimes perceived as transitory, many simply do not have the capacity to purchase a home. Some may be able to rent single-family detached homes, but others may desire the

**TABLE A.1: Summary of permitted residential structures, Tacoma, WA, 2015.**

RESIDENTIAL STRUCTURE		R-1	R-2	R-2 SRD	HMR-SRD	R-3	R-4L	R-4	RCX	NRX
MISSING MIDDLE	Single-family, detached	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
	Duplex	N	N	CU	CU	P	P	P	P	CU
	Triplex	N	N	CU	CU	P	P	P	P	CU
	Multi-family (4+)	N	N	N	N	N	P	P	P	N
	Townhouse	N	N	CU	N	P	P	P	P	CU
	ADU, attached	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
	ADU, detached	N	N	N	N	P	P	P	P	P

Sources: TMC 13.06.100, Table C, Land use requirements, pp. 13-75–13-82; TMC 13.06.300, Table D, Land use requirements, pp. 13-115–13-121.



amenities of a traditional neighborhood without the responsibility of an entire house or simply want a less expensive option. Restricting the development of duplexes and other small, multi-family dwellings, as well as ADUs, severely limits options for people with those goals. The more rentals there are available, the more affordable rentals will be.

**TABLE A.2: Select Lot Size and Building Envelope Standards, Tacoma, WA, 2015.**

RESIDENTIAL STRUCTURE		R-1	R-2	R-2 SRD	HMR-SRD	R-3	R-4L	R-4	RCX	NRX	NOTES
MINIMUM LOT AREA	Single-Family Detached, Standard Lots	7,500 ft <sup>2</sup>	5,000 ft <sup>2</sup>	5,000 ft <sup>2</sup>	5,000 ft <sup>2</sup>	5,000 ft <sup>2</sup>	5,000 ft <sup>2</sup>	5,000 ft <sup>2</sup>	0 ft <sup>2</sup>	3,750 ft <sup>2</sup>	Consistent throughout fairly different zoning districts.
	Single-Family Detached, Small Lots	6,750 ft <sup>2</sup>	4,500 ft <sup>2</sup>	4,500 ft <sup>2</sup>	4,500 ft <sup>2</sup>	3,500 ft <sup>2</sup>	3,000 ft <sup>2</sup>	2,500 ft <sup>2</sup>	0 ft <sup>2</sup>	N	Allows for flexibility in infill development.
	Two-family dwelling	N	N	6,000 ft <sup>2</sup>	6,000 ft <sup>2</sup>	6,000 ft <sup>2</sup>	4,250 ft <sup>2</sup>	3,750 ft <sup>2</sup>	0 ft <sup>2</sup>	2,500 ft <sup>2</sup> per unit	Does not necessitate doubling of lot size when doubling number of units.
	Three-family dwelling	N	N	9,000 ft <sup>2</sup>	9,000 ft <sup>2</sup>	9,000 ft <sup>2</sup>	5,500 ft <sup>2</sup>	5,000 ft <sup>2</sup>	0 ft <sup>2</sup>	6,000 ft <sup>2</sup>	Assumes that addition of third unit requires 3,000 sq. ft. more space in several districts.
	Multiple-family dwelling	N	N	N	N	N	6,000* ft <sup>2</sup>	6,000 ft <sup>2</sup>	0 ft <sup>2</sup>	6,000 ft <sup>2</sup>	*Plus 1,500 sq. ft. for each unit in excess of four.
	Mobile home and trailer court	N	N	N	N	N	3.5 ac.*	N	N	N	*Provided at least 3,500 sq. ft. is provided for each mobile home
MINIMUM LOT WIDTH	Standard Lots	50 ft.	50 ft.	50 ft.	50 ft.	50 ft.*	50 ft.*	50 ft.*	0 ft	25 ft.**	*14ft. for townhomes, 32ft. for two-family dwellings **Also for duplex/triplex, 14 for townhouses
	Single-Family Small Lots	45 ft.	35 ft.	35 ft.	35 ft.	30 ft.	25 ft.	25 ft.	0 ft	N	May be subject to reductions pursuant to 13.06.145.
	Maximum Height Limits, main buildings	35 ft.	35 ft.	35 ft.	35 ft.	35 ft.	35 ft.	60 ft.	60 ft.	35 ft.	Same throughout very differently developed neighborhoods. For small lots, lots 40-50 feet wide may be 30 feet tall. Lots < 40 feet wide may be 25 feet tall.

Sources: TMC 13.06.100, Table D, Lot size and building envelope standards, pp. 13-82–13-84; TMC 13.06.300, Table E, Building envelope standards, pp. 13-122–13-125.

N = Not permitted.

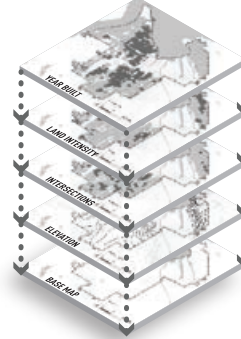
**TABLE A.3: Municipal code supporting aesthetic compatibility, increasing density and maintaining affordability, Tacoma, WA, 2015.**

MUNICIPAL CODE	PROMOTES	WHAT IT DOES	RELEVANCE
<b>13.04.230.D</b> Pipestem Lots	<b>D</b> <b>A</b>	"to minimize negative impacts of inconsistent development patterns while allowing land to be divided when more traditional layouts are not achievable" - allows for development of inner-block sections of large lots through non-traditional siting practices	Allows for utilization of portions of properties that might otherwise be inaccessible due to requirements for frontage along a street. Allows for more units per neighborhood block and more/cheaper development options.
<b>13.05.045</b> Historic preservation land use decisions	<b>C</b>	"provide regulatory procedures for historic preservation decision making bodies" - allows for discretion to "approve or deny proposals to alter individual properties or contributing properties within historic and conservation districts" which includes residential areas	Homes in historic review areas are subject to special design review, which is often more restrictive than zoning code for underlying residential district. Landmarks Preservation Commission must issue Certificate of Approval for final designs for changes. Application for such an approval requires a significant amount of specifics, including but not limited to: proposed colors of paint, photographs of architectural details. Ensures that historic areas do not experience surprising changes.
<b>13.06.100.D</b> Lot size and building envelope standards	<b>C</b>	Vehicular doors must be set back 20 feet from property line, minimum front setback can be average of yards of adjacent buildings, dwellings with capability of developing vehicular access at the rear of the building must do so (i.e. in alleyways),	Maintains a pedestrian focus on street, allows for variation in setback to best match surrounding development.
<b>13.06.100.F</b> Accessory building standards	<b>C</b>	Limits accessory building footprints, total can be no more than 85% of square footage of main building footprint, no more than 15% square footage of lot. Total building footprint square footage may be no larger than 1,000 sq. ft.; if accessory dwellings include a detached ADU, may be up to 1,500 sq. ft. total.	Further code put additional limitations on development of auxiliary dwelling units. When including other accessory building footprints or considering smaller lot sizes, may significantly limit size of ADUs.
<b>13.06.145</b> Small-lot single-family residential development	<b>C</b> <b>D</b> <b>A</b>	New single-family dwellings on new lots may be smaller than normal minimum lot sizes so long as meet requirements in Design Standards regulations of this section. Design Standards give guidance on form to best blend in with surrounding lots.	Allows for flexibility in infill development by legalizing smaller than normal minimum lot sizes, which are cheaper to develop and create denser neighborhoods. Design regulations direct these dwellings to blend in with normal development patterns.
<b>13.06.150</b> Accessory dwelling units	<b>C</b> <b>D</b> <b>A</b>	"Add affordable units to the existing housing supply," ensure that "ADUs are installed in a compatible manner," "increase density," generally guide development of ADUs through regulation of size (no larger than 1,000 square feet), design (much match main dwelling), location, ownership, etc.	ADUs allow for more people to enjoy the amenities of a neighborhood while making a minimal physical impact. ADUs can both be a means of income for homeowners who wish to rent them out and cheaper housing for those willing to live in smaller spaces than traditional single-family homes. Design requirements strive to design ADUs that are low-profile.
<b>13.06.501.N</b> Single-, Two- and Three-Family Dwelling Standards	<b>C</b>	To "emphasize pedestrian access, compatibility with residential neighborhoods, building orientation to the street, and to minimize impacts of vehicular access." Defines entry and facade design for duplexes and triplexes.	Requires that duplex and triplex dwellings follow particular design guidelines to look like single-family homes or delineated units.
<b>13.06.555</b> View-Sensitive Overlay	<b>C</b>	"A building, structure, or portion thereof, hereafter erected, shall not exceed a height of 25 feet" with some exceptions.	This generally protects views looking into the Puget Sound.
<b>13.07.040</b> Historic Special Review Districts / Conservation Districts	<b>C</b>	Defines characteristics of each Overlay Zone. Historic: "areas that possess a high level of historic integrity in existing architecture, development patterns and setting, in which these characteristics should be preserved." Conservation: "clearly established existing character related to historical development patterns and/or the overall appearance of building types that were constructed in a defined period of time, generally prior to 50 years before the present."	Some vagueness and some overlap.
<b>13.07.320</b> Building and streetscape design guidelines in the North Slope Historic Special Review District	<b>C</b>	"Architectural integrity, as it relates to scale, proportion, texture, color, compatible materials, space, and composition in various periods of architecture, should be respected and, to the extent possible, maintained in contributing properties." Also defines design characteristics for new or non-contributing dwellings.	Residential area that includes historic design review.

Sources: TMC 13.04 through 13.07.

# **APPENDIX B: PATTERN MAPPING METHODOLOGY**



**CLEAN DATA****SUMMARIZE BY HEXBIN****DISTRIBUTION ANALYSIS****GIS LAYERING****POST-PROCESSING 1****CROSS-CHECK**

# PATTERN MAPPING METHODOLOGY

This appendix explains the methods used to create the residential pattern area map found in chapter 3 and clarifies the limitations of our approach.

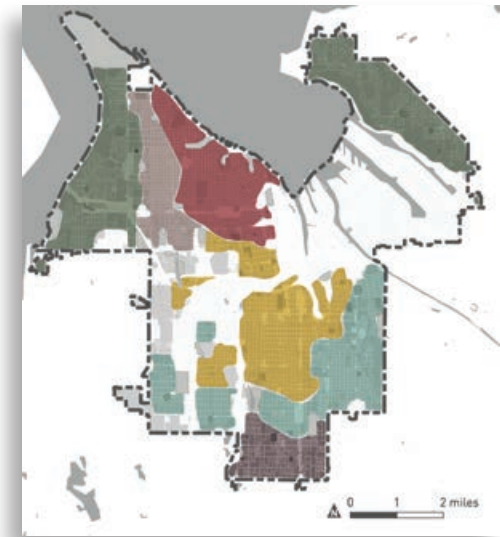
The team conducted a literature review into relevant methods for analysis of urban form. In addition, the team consulted with a subject matter expert to understand the general approach. Following background research on urban form analysis, the team selected indicators to analyze using a GIS and database tools explained below. Although primarily quantitative, the team interpreted the results of the analyses to arrive at the final pattern area map. Some results required further analysis using Google Street View and site visits

to confirm pattern area assignments. Finally, the team utilized Photoshop for post-processing cartography.

## URBAN FORM ANALYSIS BACKGROUND RESEARCH

Before conducting a literature review, the team consulted Bill Cunningham, Senior Planner at the City of Portland Bureau of Planning and Sustainability.<sup>1</sup> Bill served as the project lead for the City of Portland's pattern area study as part of the Portland Plan. His subject matter expertise provided guidance on how to approach a pattern area study for the City of Tacoma. His suggested approach was to start by mapping features of the built environment—such as street grids, building footprints, block patterns and open space systems—to identify distinguishing characteristics. Bill emphasized that the boundaries between pattern areas are never definitive, clear cut lines. He suggested utilizing

## POST-PROCESSING 2



aerial images, Google Street View and site visit photographs to help delineate pattern area edges. He noted that pattern areas' distinguishing features may congregate in an epicenter and that it may be useful to identify these centers.

The team reviewed numerous literature sources for analyzing urban form. Clifton et al (2008) provided methods for transportation planning, community design and urban design.<sup>2</sup> Specifically, this resource provided GIS methods for assessing transportation networks and accessibility (intersection and junction density), physical features and interpreting results at different geographic scales. One key takeaway was that depending on the scale of the analysis, granularity could be sacrificed to understand broader trends in urban form.

Clarke et al (2010) assessed the reliability of using Google Earth and Street View as a virtual audit instrument.<sup>3</sup> They found that the tool is reliable for assessing objective indicators of the built environment, though an auditor should use caution for gleaning more detailed observations, such as quality of streets and houses. This encouraged the team to supplement site visits with Google Street View navigation.

With these tools and knowledge in hand, the team investigated GIS methods for summarizing data over large geographic areas. One common tool is data binning, whereby a polygon grid is overlaid onto an analysis area that contains features to be summarized. It allows for visualizing trends at larger scales. Carr et al (1987)

first described the technique of using hexagon binning, which the team utilized extensively.<sup>4</sup> Although binning can be accomplished using squares, hexagons outperform squares. Being the shape most similar to a circle, hexagons are the polygon with the maximum number of sides for a regular tessellation, making them the most efficient and compact division of a two-dimensional plane. In addition, hexagons offer less spatial distortion caused by edge effects.<sup>5, 6, 7</sup>

## KEY QUESTIONS

Armed with a host of methods, the team sought to answer specific data questions to uncover Tacoma's pattern areas:

- » How did the city develop over time?
- » What is the spatial distribution of how intensively land is used?
- » How does the street grid affect permeability of space?
- » Where are topographic features more prominent?

## DATA SOURCES AND TOOLS

There were three primary data sources used in developing a pattern area map:

- » Pierce County Assessor-Treasurer tax lot data (2014)
- » City of Tacoma building footprints (2005)
- » USGS Global multi-resolution

terrain elevation data (GMTED) (2010) for elevation contours

The county assessor website provided free and open data from the Tax and Assessment System and the Appraisal System. This complex database provided dozens of variables relating to the built environment, including year built, land and improvement value, building area, housing types, views and lot sizes. From parcel shapefiles, we were able to derive block structure for the city. We cannot emphasize enough how integral this rich dataset was to the pattern mapping analysis.

Although a decade old, the building footprints shapefile provided by the City of Tacoma were essential for assessing broad development trends across the city. It allowed the team to see improvement placements, proximity to other structures, setbacks and continuity of building frontages.

The team utilized the tools below to carry out the pattern mapping exercise:

- » QGIS
- » ESRI's line and junction connectivity tool
- » R statistical package
- » Microsoft Excel
- » Photoshop
- » Google Street View

## DATA ANALYSIS AND POST-PROCESSING

Having completed the literature review and data collection, the team followed the process outlined below to analyze the data:

1. Clean the data and perform table joins.
2. Set up data binning and summarize trends.
3. Analyze distribution to set cut points for “binary maps”.
4. Overlay binary maps and look for boundaries.
5. Confirm boundaries and pattern area assignments using photographs.
6. Post-process in Photoshop.

### >>CLEANING THE DATA

The team derived intersection and junction density using ESRI’s line and junction connectivity tool. A four-way intersection yields a junction count of four, whereas a T-shaped intersection would yield three.

The assessor’s data were in raw text files that needed to be cleaned to be associated with a GIS. First, all data were filtered to include **only residential structures**, excluding high-rise apartments taller than three stories. Variables across multiple data files were selected and joined by a common parcel ID and exported to a GIS-readable format (CSV).

Second, the team used a GIS to find the centroid of tax lot shapefiles. The cleaned tables containing data were joined to the centroids using the parcel ID.

### >>SUMMARIZING DATA BY HEXAGON BINS ▼

The team selected a hexagon bin with a side length of 800 feet (38.2 acres) for its ability to encompass several blocks. Using the free and open-source application QGIS, hexagon bins were created and assigned a unique ID. Tax lot centroids and intersection counts falling within each bin were aggregated using summation, averages and medians. The bin was then assigned the results.



### >>DISTRIBUTION ANALYSIS

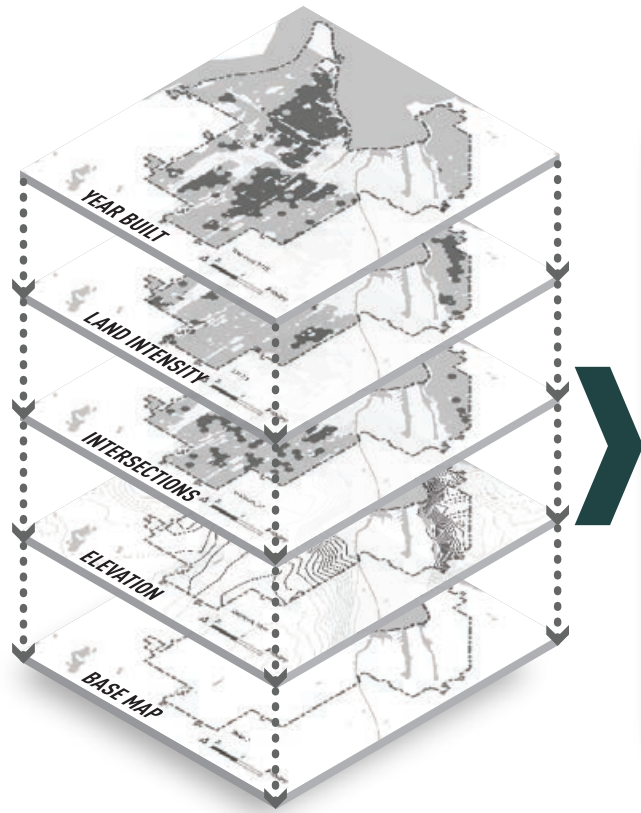
The hexbin results were exported for analysis in R statistical package. The sample distribution was calculated for each metric and used to determine cut points for later GIS layering.

For land intensity, the sum of all building area and all land area were used to calculate the average ratio of land-to-improvement. The 25th percentile—a land-improvement ratio of up to 4.4—served as the cut point designating “high intensity.”

For intersection density, the team used the count of junctions rather than the average. Since each hexagon has the same area (38.2 acres), the average intersection per acre could easily be derived. A cut point at the 75th percentile—39 junctions, or about one junction per acre—was selected to designate “high density.”

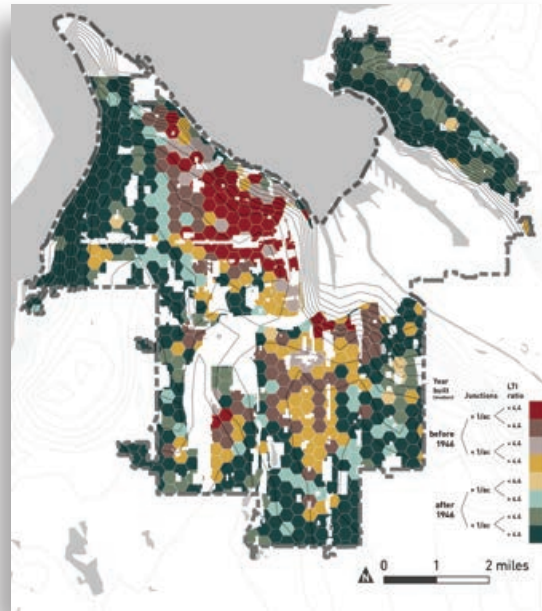
For year built, eras of development (i.e., pre-war) were more meaningful than percentiles. Thus, a cut point of 1945 was selected to designate “pre-war.”





### >>GIS LAYERING AND POST-PROCESSING ▲

After setting the cut points for each metric, the team created a series of “binary” maps. Each map depicted high and low values—land area was either intensively used or low; either high intersection density or low; either pre-war or post-war. Elevation data were included as 100-foot contour lines. The layers were then exported and colorized in Photoshop to look for trends across the city. These trends were identified by the areas where different high and low values overlapped, suggesting boundaries.



### >>VALIDATING BOUNDARIES ▼

Using the preliminary boundary results, the team referenced the street grid, site visit photographs and Google Street View to ensure validity. Some areas needed more exploration than others to determine its pattern area.

Once the boundaries were determined, each hexbin was re-assigned a pattern area ID for analyzing the survey results.



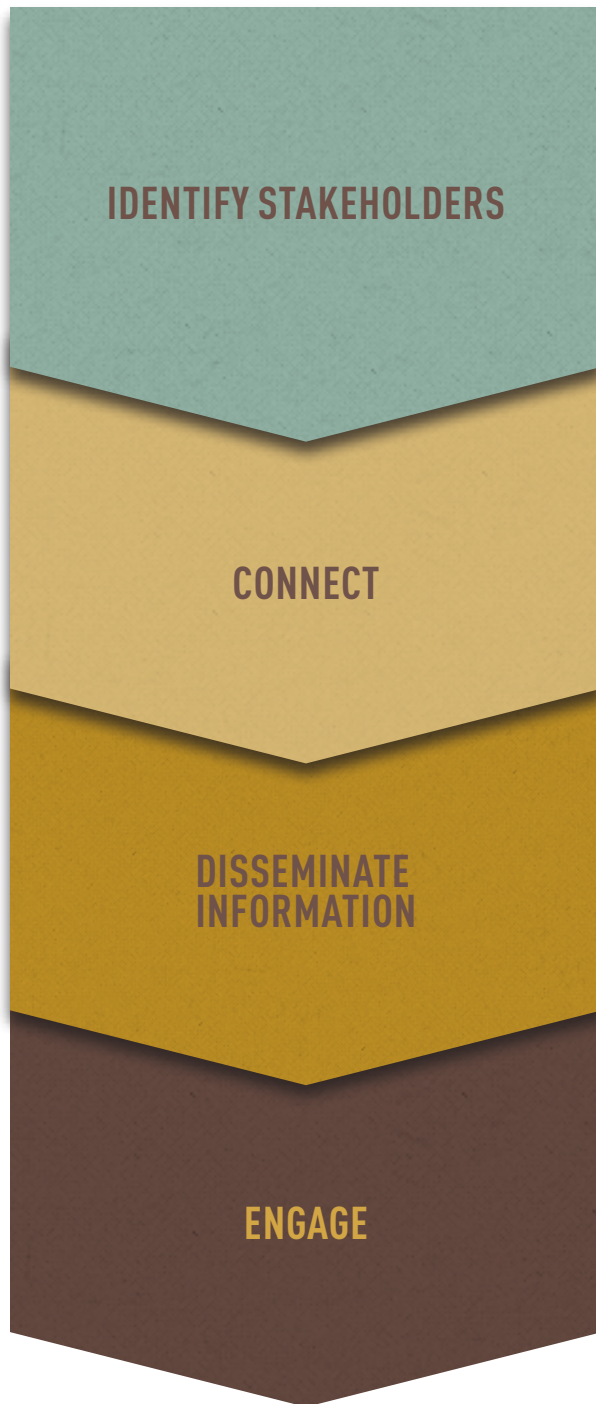
### >>POST-PROCESSING

Finally, the results were processed in Photoshop to paint each pattern area. Because pattern areas do not have discrete boundaries, the team opted to emphasize this fact by using subtle shapes with few hard edges.



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# **APPENDIX C: COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT REPORT**



# INTRODUCTION

Our team designed a public outreach and community engagement process to gather input from a wide range of people who affect and are affected by residential infill development in the City of Tacoma. Our process engaged key stakeholders, including elected officials, city staff, planning experts, property owners, developers, community leaders, and residents to identify key issues and priorities for guiding residential infill development in the City of Tacoma.

In order to execute this process, our team prepared a Community Engagement Strategy that outlined the groups we intend to engage, the methods of community engagement and a timeline for these activities. Three methods of community engagement were proposed: stakeholder and expert interviews, an electronic survey and neighborhood walking tours. We expanded our involvement to five tasks, embracing opportunities for further public involvement:

1. Expert/Stakeholder Interviews and Community Contacts
2. Survey
3. Open House
4. Walking Tours
5. Public presentations

This report describes the implementation of our engagement strategy and the results of the tasks above.

# PROCESS

The community engagement strategy involved a four-part process: (1) Identifying a diverse group of stakeholders, as well as the opportunities and risks associated with targeting different groups, (2) connecting to stakeholders and relating to them through the crafting of key messages, (3) identifying networks and channels of communication to broadly disseminate information about the project, (4) carrying out engagement activities.

## STAGE 1: IDENTIFY STAKEHOLDERS

The first stage was about identifying different communities, special interest groups, experts and other stakeholders. A significant part of the outreach process included identifying the many communities that make up Tacoma and their different points of contact. In addition to established Neighborhood Councils, outreach targeted specific community and advocacy groups, such as the Hilltop Action Coalition and the Safe Streets Campaign (see Appendix A for a complete list of community contacts).

## STAGE 2: CONNECT

The second stage involved crafting a communication plan in order to guide the group's efforts in establishing relationships with each stakeholder. In addition to phone calls and emails, a media kit was assembled so that key messages could be relayed succinctly to different audiences.

## STAGE 3: DISSEMINATE INFORMATION

Information was disseminated through a variety of methods:

- » **Online:** A project website was established to host information about the project and team, provide a library documents, announce updates on activities and provide a link to the survey. In addition, an active Facebook page was created, which reached over 100 groups and individuals.
- » **In print:** In April 2015, the Tacoma Weekly interviewed the group and ran a front-page article about the project.
- » **In person:** Efforts were made to present the project to each neighborhood council during their monthly meetings. The group presented at five neighborhood council meetings:
  - » New Tacoma: April 8th, 2015
  - » West End: April 15th, 2015
  - » South Tacoma: April 15th, 2015
  - » South End: April 20th, 2015
  - » Eastside: April 20th, 2015

**Table C.1: Community contacts list, tacHOMEa project, 2015.**

STAKEHOLDER CATEGORY	ORGANIZATION	CONTACT NAME
City of Tacoma Staff	PDS Permit Counter	Lisa Spadoni
	Historic Preservation Office	Rueben Knight
	Senior Planning Staff	Shirley Schultz
City Council	District 4 (Eastside)	Marty Campbell
Developer	Sager Family Homes	Bill Sager
Realtor	Move to Tacoma	Marguerite Giguere
Community Organization	Hilltop Action Coalition	Bradley Killian & Elizabeth Leonline
	Centro Latino	Kate Smith
	Tacoma Housing Authority	Josh Jorgensen
	Central	Dough Schafer
Neighborhood Councils	North End	Rachel Cardwell
	South Tacoma	Skip Vaughn
	West End	Ginny Eberhardt
	South End	Earl Brysdon
	Eastside	Lynnette Scheidt
	New Tacoma	Liz Burris
	North East	John Thurlow
	Safe Streets Campaign	Traci Kelly
Active transportation advocacy	Downtown on the Go	Kristina Walker
Local newspapers	Tacoma Weekly	Matt Nagle
College student groups	UW Tacoma Dept. Urban Studies	Julia Smith
	UPS Student Union	Rachel Cardwell
	Dome BA	Keith Stone †
Business associations (BA)	Fern Hill BA	Kim Anderson
	Hilltop BA	Kevin Grossman †
	Old Town BA	Kathy Manke †
	Pacific Ave BA	John Hoover †
	Proctor BA	Harold McMillian †
	South Tacoma BA	Brenda Truman †
	Stadium BA	Tony Nausid †

†: Individuals who were contacted but did not reply in time for publication.



## INTERVIEW WITH BILL SAGER - SAGER FAMILY HOMES, DEVELOPER <sup>1</sup>

The team visited Bill Sager at his work site at 719 N Grant Street, a single family home near completion. Bill Sager made it clear that their business is fully market-driven, so if the government wants something to happen that is contrary to the market, developers need an incentive that pays. He is in favor of density incentives like smaller lot minimums and townhouses, as more houses is always good for his business. However, he is strictly a single-family builder for several reasons: once a builder is in one insurance grouping it is difficult to switch to duplex/multi-family, and he likes selling to people who will own and care for their home. In his opinion, people still always want the largest lot possible and garages, even if it is not intended for auto use. His engagement with the permit counter is generally positive, and says that the “signal” he gets from planners is essential; i.e. if they want more houses and make it easier for him, he is happy to do what is needed. A major barrier for small developers is infrastructure costs like re-paving an entire section of a road just to hook up to a water main. Bill suggests that a city should be responsible for any infrastructure improvements that are needed to encourage residential development.

**Table C.2: Key informant and Stakeholder Interviews.**

NAME	AFFILIATION	AREA OF EXPERTISE
<b>Bill Cunningham</b>	Senior Planner, Portland Bureau of Planning & Sustainability	Neighborhood pattern areas, urban design, infill development
<b>Bill Sager</b>	Developer, Sager Family Homes	Single-family residential development
<b>Lisa Bates</b>	Associate Professor, Portland State University, School of Urban Studies and Planning	Fair housing policy
<b>Bradley Killian and Elizabeth Leontine</b>	President and Secretary Hilltop Action Coalition	Housing and community development
<b>Eli Spevak</b>	Multi-family developer, Orange Splot LLC	Innovative housing types and zoning code
<b>Rachel F Ginis and Ellen Nicosia</b>	Secondary unit developers, Lilypad Homes	Junior accessory dwelling units

## STAGE 4: ENGAGE

Three community engagement methods were undertaken: interviews, an online survey, and neighborhood walking tours. These activities were supplemented with project outreach through two open houses for Tacoma’s Comprehensive Plan Update and three public presentations.

# ENGAGEMENT METHODS AND RESULTS

## ENGAGEMENT METHOD 1: INTERVIEWS

Expert and stakeholder interviewees included public, private and nonprofit

actors with knowledge in issues of housing policy and development, as well as urban planning and design. Table C.2 identifies interviews that are notable for their contribution to the project.

## ENGAGEMENT METHOD 2: SURVEY

In order to gain an understanding of the distinct qualities that characterize Tacoma’s neighborhoods, and capture the neighborhood design elements that are most desirable, the team conducted an online survey. The survey had two sections: a design issues and priorities section, and a visual preferences section.

The survey was disseminated widely through all the team’s contacts, social media and the City of Tacoma’s website

and listservs. Flyers were posted in major community centers across Tacoma. The Visual Preferences Survey (VPS) section was also displayed on a poster board and brought to two Open Houses for the city's Comprehensive Plan Update, supplementing the responses received online.

## SURVEY DEMOGRAPHICS

We received 339 valid responses to the survey. Over 90% of our responses came from those individuals living within Tacoma's city limits.

The largest respondent age group was 35-44 years old, though nearly half of respondents are 45 and older. About 27% of respondents report having a child under the age of 18 in the household, and about 20% report having an adult over the age of 60 in the household. Two-person households account for 40% of survey respondents.

Overall, females are overrepresented in the survey data (60%), as were Caucasians (86%). Survey respondents are more likely to have a higher combined household income than Tacoma's median income (\$50,503). Nearly a quarter (23%) of respondents currently rent the house they lived in.

<b>Race/ethnicity</b>	<b>#</b>	<b>%</b>
White or Caucasian	264	86.0
Asian or Asian-American	1	0.3
American Indian or Alaska Native	3	1.0
Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander	1	0.3
Two or more races	20	6.5
Hispanic/Latino	10	3.3
Other	8	2.6
<b>Total (n)</b>	<b>307</b>	<b>100</b>

<b>Sex</b>	<b>#</b>	<b>%</b>
Male	113	38
Female	181	60
Other	6	2
<b>Total (n)</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>100</b>

<b>Age Group</b>	<b>#</b>	<b>%</b>
18-24	16	5
25-34	70	23
35-44	74	25
45-54	54	18
55-65	51	17
65 or older	34	11
<b>Total (n)</b>	<b>299</b>	<b>100</b>

<b>Household Income</b>	<b>#</b>	<b>%</b>
Less than \$10,000	5	2
\$10,000 to \$14,999	6	2
\$15,000 to \$24,999	6	2
\$25,000 to \$34,999	13	5
\$35,000 to \$49,999	29	10
\$50,000 to \$74,999	68	24
\$75,000 to \$99,999	56	19
\$100,000 or more	105	36
<b>Total (n)</b>	<b>288</b>	<b>100</b>

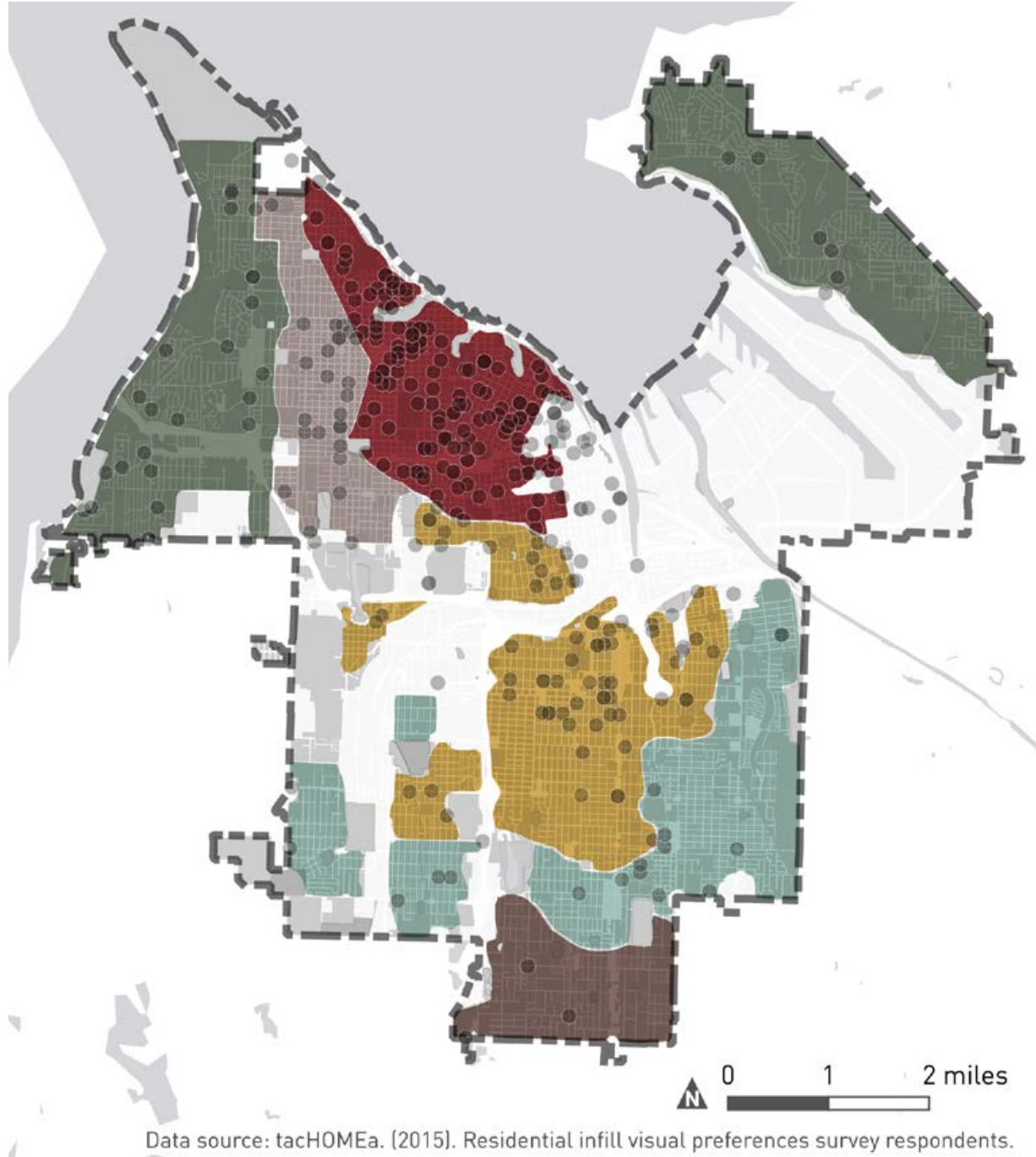
<b>Housing tenure</b>	<b>#</b>	<b>%</b>
Current renter	70	23
Current owner	233	77
<b>Total (n)</b>	<b>303</b>	<b>100</b>

## INTERVIEW WITH ELI SPEVAK - ORANGE SPLIT LLC, DEVELOPER <sup>2</sup>

The team interviewed Eli Spevak at Cully Grove, a "multi-generational, solar-powered garden community" as described on its website.<sup>3</sup> Spevak is a developer of community-oriented homes such as Cully Grove that are affordable and environmentally friendly. A major takeaway from this conversation was that the square footage of a home is the largest factor in determining overall energy usage for a structure. Approximately 65% of a building's energy usage is related to its size. In order to build innovative housing types with small building and ecological footprints, Spevak emphasized the need to incentivize homes with smaller floor plans. One option that he has found particularly useful in his developments was density bonuses for planned unit developments, which allow for more units to be built with lower square footage per unit. This type of policy can help provide housing types that meet environmental goals of reduced energy consumption and social goals of supplying attainable housing units, while remaining financially feasible for developers.



**Map C.1: Survey responses by pattern area, tachHOMEa project, 2015**



Pattern Area	#	%
Post-war slopes	29	9
Mixed-era transition	26	8
Pre-war compact	146	43
Pre-war expansion	65	19
Mid-century expansion	20	6
Suburban fringe	2	1
Downtown	15	4
None	36	11
<b>Total (n)</b>	<b>339</b>	<b>100</b>

Number of people in household	#	%
1	53	18
2	124	41
3	48	16
4	51	17
5 or more	25	8
<b>Total (n)</b>	<b>301</b>	<b>100</b>

#### RESPONSES BY PATTERN AREA

On average, respondents from the Post-war slopes and Mixed-era transition pattern areas were more likely to find the proposed design types as a positive addition to their neighborhood, indicating more flexibility in tastes and preferences. The Pre-War Compact area tended to favor smaller homes, whereas the larger homes on larger lots were more highly rated by those in the mid-century expansion pattern area. Over two thirds of respondents in Pre-War Compact, mixed-era transition and Pre-War Expansion areas favored ADUs.

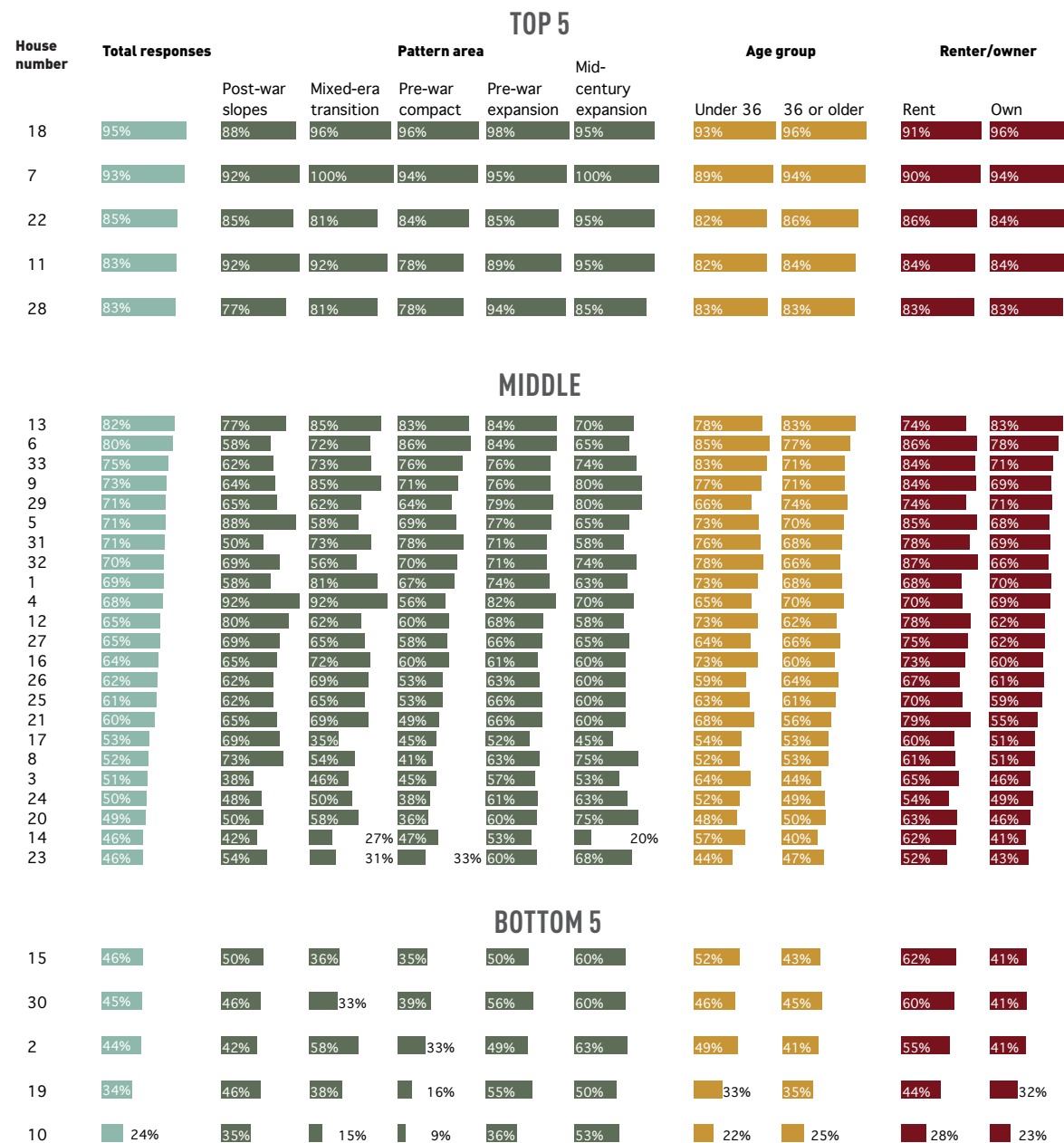
## RESPONSES BY AGE GROUP

Trends in preferences for different types of design may be reflected by different age groups. With aging baby boomers and a growing millennial population, literature points to shifting trends in consumer attitudes and preferences. Identifying differences in design preferences among millennials (<36) and non-millennials (>35) is relevant to understanding what kind of housing may be more appealing to Tacoma's growing population over the next 20 years. As shown by the survey, the millennial age group was more likely to favor more modern, attached homes, indicating less aversion to higher density units. An image of cottage cluster homes was well responded to by non-millennials, suggesting that the aging-in-place priorities characteristic of this age group may align well with the higher-density preferences of the millennial population.

## RESPONSES BY RENTER/OWNER

Overall, renters tend to favor a greater variety of housing styles than owners. The greatest difference in preference was with two types of housing that were attached and modern. This may reflect the concerns voiced by renters over maintenance issues and upkeep, suggesting that modern design is more likely to incorporate newer, higher-quality construction materials.

**Table C.3: Detailed visual preferences survey results<sup>1</sup>, tacHOMEa project, 2015**



<sup>1</sup> see Chapter 4 for survey images in order of preference



## NEIGHBORHOOD DESIGN QUALITIES

The first section of the survey presented a series of statements that described general neighborhood qualities. Respondents were asked to identify the extent to which each quality is a prominent feature of their neighborhood (Table 2).

For the purposes of the survey analysis, the Mid-Century Expansion pattern area and the Suburban Fringe pattern area were combined due to the low response rate for the Suburban Fringe.

As expected, those from the Post-War Slope pattern area are most likely to

state that there are views of the Sound and other natural features in their neighborhood. However, they are not as likely as those from the Pre-War Compact area to agree that these views were a defining characteristic.

Generally, most respondents across all pattern areas agreed that the streets in their neighborhoods did not have bicycle lanes. The Pre-War Compact pattern area are more likely to agree that their neighborhood has connected sidewalks and curbs, as opposed to other areas, especially the Mid-Century Expansion and Suburban Fringe.

Concurrently, respondents in pattern areas north of I-5 are more likely to agree that they had places to walk to in their neighborhood as opposed to those in the Pre-War and Mid-Century Expansion and Suburban Fringe areas.

According to the survey, street trees was a feature that was reported to be less of a prominent feature in areas like the Mid-Century Expansion/Suburban Fringe than in the Pre-War Compact pattern area. However, the Mid-Century Expansion/Suburban Fringe are more likely to agree that there are trees in private yards as opposed to along the streets.

**Table C.4: Neighborhood feature survey responses shown in percentages, tacHOMEa project, 2015**

		Post-war slopes			Mixed-era transition			Pre-war compact			Pre-war expansion			Mid-century expansion/ suburban fringe		
		Agree	I Don't Know	Disagree	Agree	I Don't Know	Disagree	Agree	I Don't Know	Disagree	Agree	I Don't Know	Disagree	Agree	I Don't Know	Disagree
Walkability	I have places to walk to in my neighborhood.	86	7	7	88	4	8	96	3	1	75	9	15	60	10	30
	are in good condition.	48	14	38	36	16	48	32	11	57	22	20	58	27	5	68
The streets in my neighborhood...	have connected sidewalks.	52	3	45	48	4	48	82	8	10	55	5	40	45	9	45
	have curbs.	66	0	34	40	20	40	82	7	11	56	6	38	45	5	50
	have bicycle lanes.	29	7	64	24	12	64	27	14	58	14	9	77	14	14	73
I feel safe...	walking down the streets in my neighborhood.	82	14	4	92	0	8	88	6	6	55	20	25	70	10	20
	biking down the streets in my neighborhood.	29	46	25	56	36	8	54	26	21	29	45	26	40	25	35
My neighborhood...	has alleys used for parking vehicles.	14	29	57	44	24	32	39	32	29	35	28	37	25	25	50
	has adequate on-street parking.	62	21	17	88	8	4	64	17	19	64	16	20	43	24	33
	has adequate off-street parking.	83	7	10	88	8	4	49	24	28	40	18	42	48	24	29
There are trees	along the streets in my neighborhood.	57	18	25	80	8	12	84	10	6	66	9	25	50	9	41
	...and they are primarily large, mature street trees.	56	25	19	68	26	5	73	20	7	60	18	23	36	27	36
	in private yards in my neighborhood.	89	11	0	96	4	0	91	6	2	97	3	0	89	11	0
	...and they are primarily large, mature yard trees.	54	38	8	79	21	0	73	22	5	69	20	10	76	18	6
Green space...	The private yards in my neighborhood are well maintained.	64	29	7	84	16	0	81	15	4	46	31	23	45	35	20
	I feel there is adequate green space in my neighborhood.	79	7	14	84	12	4	73	13	15	60	20	20	71	0	29
Views...	There are views of the sound, mountains or other natural features in my neighborhood.	86	0	14	64	8	28	70	10	20	54	17	29	48	24	29
	...and these views are a defining or important characteristic of my neighborhood.	72	20	8	50	44	6	77	17	6	57	23	20	40	10	50

Shaded boxes indicate the top three features with which respondents by pattern area agreed or disagreed.

### ENGAGEMENT METHOD 3: COMPREHENSIVE PLAN OPEN HOUSES

The team supported and helped facilitate two open house events for the city's Comprehensive Plan Update. A large-scale map of the city and a visual preferences board was set up, and paper surveys were handed out at each event.

#### COUNCIL DISTRICT 5, APRIL 9, 2015

This open house was targeted towards residents of Council District 5 in the southern areas of Tacoma. Community members participated in an activity led by the Tacoma 2040 facilitators in which they were asked to identify the boundaries of their neighborhood and the qualities of their neighborhood which were most important. Our group observed this activity and also led discussions with residents on issues of housing and neighborhood character. Participants were invited to pin their residence on the large map, interact with the visual preferences board and identify their favorite housing types on the paper survey (7 respondents).

#### COUNCIL DISTRICT 2, APRIL 16, 2015

This open house was held at Stadium High School in the North Slope area and was more heavily attended than any of the Comprehensive Plan meetings. Around twenty adult attendees participated in the engagement activities, which centered around defining their neighborhoods and identifying aspects of them that they would like to preserve. Ten people filled out our paper housing visual preference survey.

### ENGAGEMENT METHOD 4: WALKING TOURS

As a major component of gathering qualitative data through community insight, the team planned for four (and ultimately held three) walking tours. These were geographically dispersed across the city to give a broad look at the diversity of residential development patterns in Tacoma. Promotion of walking tours happened through lots of advertisement on Facebook, personal emails to several organizations and a church in Fern Hill, and a partnership with Downtown on the Go, who regularly hosts tours of Tacoma. Each tour was kicked off with free donuts and some informational conversation about the project's purpose and where this engagement fit into the process. During tours, tour guides allowed for conversation to flow naturally





as attendees noted their surroundings, and were otherwise prompted by a list of relevant, pre-determined guiding questions. Scribes took notes on attendee responses and general commentary, and after tours, this information was organized by tour and subject matter to supplement survey data.

#### **NORTH END, HILLTOP NEIGHBORHOOD, MAY 2, 10AM**

This tour was an opportunity to explore an R2-SRD area (which allows for some duplex, triplex, and small multi-family with special review, though many are historic and grandfathered into the zoning). This walk was also specifically routed and planned to focus around the issues of gentrification and displacement that this neighborhood could potentially see in the future. Partnership with Hilltop Action Coalition ensured that we had a great turnout of around 15 people, which split into two groups. Many of the attendees were local to the neighborhood.

#### **WEST END, NEAR VASSAULT PLAYFIELD, MAY 2, 2PM**

This tour met at Vassault Playfield and walked into an adjacent neighborhood for a one mile loop. Three residents attended.



#### **SOUTH END, NEAR MOORE PUBLIC LIBRARY, MAY 3, 10AM**

This tour met at the Moore Public Library and had 6 attendees. This area is mostly small, well-maintained pre-war homes, with some post-war mixed in. A regular street grid is interspersed here with small traffic circles to slow cars.

#### **FERN HILL, NEAR FERN HILL LIBRARY, MAY 3, 2PM**

Unfortunately, due to lack of interest, the Fern Hill tour was canceled. The intention behind selecting this location for a tour was to include a walk in an area on the “fringe” of town, where urban platting blends into nearly rural, with very large, often deep blocks and long lots necessitating riding lawnmowers. Some of these large blocks include flag lots or pipestem development, as well as PRD-type developments.

### **ENGAGEMENT METHOD 5: PUBLIC PRESENTATIONS**

The group made two public presentations to the Planning Commission and attended an Affordable Housing Policy Advisory Group (AHPAG) meeting. In addition, the project was presented to a PSU Sustainability Friday Seminar, attended by a group of students from the UW Tacoma Urban Studies department.



# **APPENDIX D: COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT MATERIALS**



# OUTREACH FLYERS



## You know that Tacoma's neighborhoods are special.

Tacoma's neighborhoods remain affordable and have maintained their unique character in the face of major development pressures across the Pacific Northwest.

## Help the City keep them that way.

If you would like to...

- ensure that Tacoma remains an affordable place to live for yourself and others,
- have housing options that meet your household's needs in the neighborhood where you would like to live,
- have input into the future of what your neighborhood looks like,
- share what makes Tacoma's neighborhoods different from those in other cities,
- provide information that may inform City policies around residential development, and
- be a good neighbor by putting a voice to your community's housing needs

... then we need your help!

## Your input is essential!

Take the survey at <http://j.mp/srvyweb>.

Visit our website at [www.tacHOMEa.org](http://www.tacHOMEa.org).



Each survey participant will be entered into a raffle for a \$20 gift certificate to a grocery store of their choice.

Interested in participating in **walking tours** on May 2nd or 3rd? For that or other questions, please contact us at [info@tacHOMEa.org](mailto:info@tacHOMEa.org). We would love to hear from you!



## The City of Tacoma must plan for 127,000 additional residents and 47,000 new housing units by 2040.

### Where will these people and units go?

While much of this development can occur in higher-density centers and corridors, many current residents, as well as newcomers, will still desire homes in low- to medium-density neighborhoods, necessitating *infill development*. As has occurred across the Pacific Northwest, a revival in the development potential of Tacoma's neighborhoods has encouraged this new development. Achieving consistency with neighborhood design or other objectives, such as pedestrian orientation, affordable building design, and sustainable construction, can be difficult. This creates a problem for ensuring compatibility with neighborhood design and the perceived character of residential areas. Not surprisingly, the debate surrounding this concern is often design-centric and code-specific. However, this can distract from the even more **critical discussions around essential housing issues stemming from growth and development: those of housing diversity and affordability, and concerns around displacement.**

### Where does tacHOMEa fit in?

The tacHOMEa student project is a partnership between City of Tacoma Planning and Development Services and the Portland State University Master of Urban and Regional Planning Workshop. This project will open a discussion around several essential housing and planning questions: why is it important to **diversify the housing stock** and encourage **affordable options** in single-family neighborhoods, and how can we ensure that this development contributes positively to **residential character**?

The purpose of this project is to develop a toolkit of strategies that promote medium-density residential infill that is sensitive to neighborhood patterns. Some of these recommendations may guide revisions to relevant sections of Tacoma's Comprehensive Plan. **Gathering community input is essential to this process** and your survey responses and other insight will help policy- and decision-makers better understand the way in which Tacoma residents hope to see their city grow over the next 25 years.

**What is infill development?** This describes new building that occurs in already-developed residential neighborhoods. New housing units may be built on pre-existing empty lots or newly formed lots, or existing homes may be replaced with new ones.

Would you like to... {

- **LEARN** about the future of residential development in your neighborhood and others?
- **EXPRESS** what you love about where you live?
- **INFLUENCE** the way the City plans for future development?

# Join us for **WALKING TOURS** of four Tacoma neighborhoods!

**SAT, MAY 2**

**10AM in HILLTOP**

Meet at Hilltop Action Coalition,  
1116 Earnest S Brazill Street

**2PM in WEST END**

Meet at Vassault Playfield  
parking lot, 6100 N. 37th Street

**SUN, MAY 3**

**10AM in SOUTH END**

Meet at Grace R. Moore Library's  
parking lot, 215 South 56th Street

**2PM in FERN HILL**

Meet at Fern Hill Library's  
parking lot, 765 South 84th Street



Over about a mile of casual walking, we will discuss qualities of the neighborhood and housing design, affordability, and character. Feedback collected during the tours will help to inform recommendations to the City for development policies.

Tacoma's residential development varies greatly across the city. Four separate tours will visit four unique neighborhoods. Please join us for any or all! Some snacks and refreshments will be provided.

If you would like to participate, please sign up on our website at [www.tacHOMEa.org/rsvp.html](http://www.tacHOMEa.org/rsvp.html).

Questions? Email [info@tacHOMEa.org](mailto:info@tacHOMEa.org).

In partnership with City of Tacoma  
Planning and Development Services  
[www.facebook.com/tacHOMEa](https://www.facebook.com/tacHOMEa)

**tacHOMEa**  
INFILL TOOLS FOR A HAPPY CITY

**SAT, MAY 2**  
**10AM in HILLTOP**

**WALKING TOUR**

★ Hilltop Action Coalition  
1116 Earnest S Brazill Street

- What are the most important qualities of this neighborhood?
- Does this neighborhood provide all of the housing options its residents would like?
- What should this neighborhood's housing look like in the future?

Questions? Email [info@tacHOMEa.org](mailto:info@tacHOMEa.org).  
More info at [www.facebook.com/tacHOMEa](http://www.facebook.com/tacHOMEa)  
and [www.tacHOMEa.org](http://www.tacHOMEa.org)

**tacHOMEa**  
INFILL TOOLS FOR A HAPPY CITY

**SAT, MAY 2**  
**2PM in WEST END**

**WALKING TOUR**

★ Vassault Playfield parking lot  
6100 N. 37th Street

- What are the most important qualities of this neighborhood?
- Does this neighborhood provide all of the housing options its residents would like?
- What should this neighborhood's housing look like in the future?

Questions? Email [info@tacHOMEa.org](mailto:info@tacHOMEa.org).  
More info at [www.facebook.com/tacHOMEa](http://www.facebook.com/tacHOMEa)  
and [www.tacHOMEa.org](http://www.tacHOMEa.org)

**tacHOMEa**  
INFILL TOOLS FOR A HAPPY CITY

**SUN, MAY 3**  
**10AM in SOUTH END**

**WALKING TOUR**

★ Grace R. Moore Library's parking lot  
215 South 56th Street

- What are the most important qualities of this neighborhood?
- Does this neighborhood provide all of the housing options its residents would like?
- What should this neighborhood's housing look like in the future?

Questions? Email [info@tacHOMEa.org](mailto:info@tacHOMEa.org).  
More info at [www.facebook.com/tacHOMEa](http://www.facebook.com/tacHOMEa)  
and [www.tacHOMEa.org](http://www.tacHOMEa.org)

**tacHOMEa**  
INFILL TOOLS FOR A HAPPY CITY

**SUN, MAY 3**  
**2PM in FERN HILL**

**WALKING TOUR**

★ Fern Hill Library's parking lot  
765 South 84th Street

- What are the most important qualities of this neighborhood?
- Does this neighborhood provide all of the housing options its residents would like?
- What should this neighborhood's housing look like in the future?

Questions? Email [info@tacHOMEa.org](mailto:info@tacHOMEa.org).  
More info at [www.facebook.com/tacHOMEa](http://www.facebook.com/tacHOMEa)  
and [www.tacHOMEa.org](http://www.tacHOMEa.org)

**tacHOMEa**  
INFILL TOOLS FOR A HAPPY CITY

# COMPREHENSIVE PLAN MEETING UPDATE POSTERS

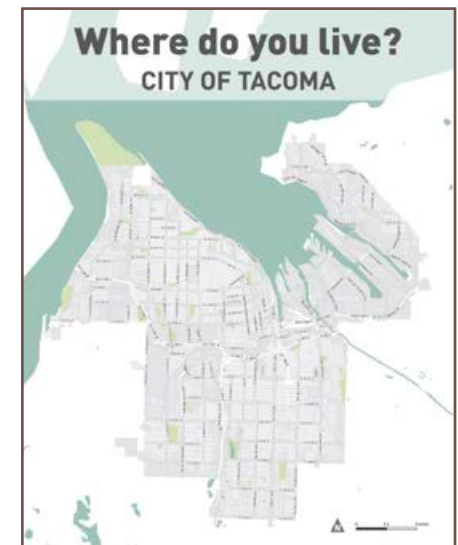
What kind of  
**HOUSING**  
would you like  
to see in your  
NEIGHBORHOOD?

Please complete the survey form provided.

For each numbered image, please indicate the extent to which you think the design of the house would be a positive or negative addition to the character of your neighborhood.



Take the full survey today at <http://j.mp/srvyweb>  
Visit our website at <http://www.tacHOMEa.org>





# TACOMA WEEKLY ARTICLE



RAINIERS OPENER A12

FREE • Friday, April 24, 2015

KOOL KEITH B5

NERD  
PANEL  
B1



## TACOMAWEEKLY.com

YOUR COMMUNITY NEWSPAPER - 26 YEARS OF SERVICE

### LOOK LARSON AUTOMOTIVE GROUP DONATES TO CHARLIE'S DINOSAUR

■ HELPING FOSTER KIDS ■ TOYS, CLOTHES DONATED ■ \$5,561 CHECK PRESENTED



**GENOROSITY.** (Top Photo) (left to right) Detective Lynelle Anderson, Sheriff Detective Ed Troyer, Detective Gary Sanders and Detective Brian Lund accept the \$5000 Charlie's Dinosaur donation from Rob Larson Jr. The Look Larson Automotive Group not only gave a large cash donation, but collected several boxes worth of toys for foster kids in need.

PHOTOS BY DEREK SHUKO

### PORTLAND GRAD STUDENTS HELP SET TACOMA'S GROWING FUTURE

WANT TO TAKE THE SURVEY  
OR HELP THE EFFORT?

By Steve Dunkelberger  
stevedunkel@tacomaweekly.com

A group of Portland State University graduate students is gathering survey results about Tacoma's housing stock as a way for the city to develop zoning rules that promote growth in neighborhoods as well as preserve affordability and character of the residential options.

Responses gathered during walking tours next month, as well as online now, will be used to aid the City of Tacoma in finding ways of improving and growing neighborhoods without pricing the current residents out of them. Planners call that "gentrification," and it is a common problem faced by growing cities.

"That is sort of a big focus of our project," said PSU Urban and Regional Design graduate student Michael Cynkar. "Each neighborhood has its own character, and the idea is to build on that."

The project will address neighborhoods holistically, not just how to preserve neighborhood characters and affordability as they grow.

"It is one of only several things we are looking at such as compatibility, growth management, preservation, etc.," Cynkar said. "Overall, we are trying to be proactive and conscious of ways to mitigate potential future displacement, but this is only one thing of several that we are working on to promote 'great urban neighborhoods.'"

Cynkar and his team of other grad students, Anais Mathez, Hannah Silver and Nicholas Kobel, will present their findings to the city in June as Tacoma marches through its Comprehensive Plan updates and the city's first Transportation Master plan.

► See FUTURE 1 page A6

### ▼ Future From page A1

The primary purpose of the "tacHOMEa" project, which is the final piece of their graduate program, is to help ensure that new residential development in Tacoma maintains affordability, expands housing options and is sensitive to the existing character of each neighborhood as the city's population grows.

And it will grow. Projections predict the city could add as many as 127,000 residents and 47,000 new housing units by 2040. Providing

residential options for those new residents will mean in-fill programs that will develop some vacant parcels as well and higher density of current sites. The trick will be to add those new residents without dramatically changing the character of the neighborhoods.

"This creates a problem for ensuring compatibility with neighborhood design and the perceived character of residential areas," Cynkar wrote in the project outline. "Not surprisingly, the debate surrounding this

concern is often design-centric and code-specific. However, this can distract from the even more critical discussions around essential housing issues stemming from growth and development: those of housing diversity and affordability, and concerns around displacement."

It was Tacoma's high forecast for growth and its diverse array of neighborhood characters that prompted the graduate students to select the project as one of eight projects out of a roster of some two-dozen proposals around the Pacific Northwest. It is the only project along Puget Sound. The rest involve Portland area neighborhoods.

"Tacoma is one that drew a lot of interest," Cynkar said.

Tacoma's future will tie in neighborhood density, historical preservation, gentrification issues, public and private projects as well as wide ranges of quality of life and transportation concerns. But before those issues can be addressed, the tacHOMEa effort needs residents to answer quick surveys about their neighborhoods.

"We want to encourage living Tacoma neighborhoods, and we are working with the city to revisit their toolkit to see if it helps preserve the distinct qualities of Tacoma's neighborhoods," Mathez wrote. "Concerns about

in-fill development tend to be about compatibility in scale, look and function, as well as increased traffic and noise impacts. How can we address these concerns while identifying options that fit and enhance residential areas? Tacoma has great urban neighborhoods, so let's work to enhance those qualities."

Is that end, the students have already gathered about 300 comments so far, but they want more since the more responses they receive will strengthen their understanding of the city's neighborhoods.

"The more the merrier, obviously," Cynkar said.

The team is particularly interested in gathering comments from around the city since the project involves each neighborhood, not just the historic, downtown or single-family communities.

### WANT TO TAKE THE SURVEY OR HELP THE EFFORT?

• The link to the survey can be found at [tacHOMEa.org/survey.html](http://tacHOMEa.org/survey.html)

• Information about participating in walking tours set for May 2, 3 can be found at [tacHOMEa.org](http://tacHOMEa.org)

• Follow the project at [facebook.com/tacHOMEa](https://www.facebook.com/tacHOMEa)

Each survey participant will be entered into a raffle for a \$20 gift certificate to a grocery store of their choice.

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For more information contact  
**253.363.6937** or email [sarah@ccswww.org](mailto:sarah@ccswww.org)

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**Fairy Gardening Class**

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Reserve your spot today! 253.364.9764

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[www.eFairies.com](http://www.eFairies.com)



# tacHOMEa NEIGHBORHOOD DESIGN ELECTRONIC SURVEY

Thank you for your participation in our study of neighborhood character in the City of Tacoma! This survey is part of a project run by graduate students in the College of Urban and Public Affairs at Portland State University, with support from the City of Tacoma. Your responses will help the City of Tacoma planning staff identify what housing types and design features are considered desirable by the community and should be encouraged in different residential neighborhoods. Depending on your answers, the survey should take about 20 minutes to complete. You can exit the survey at any time and return within 7 days—your responses will be saved. Your input will help policy- and decision-makers better understand the way in which Tacoma residents hope to see the city grow over the next 25 years. Not only is this an opportunity to have your thoughts heard by city leaders, but everyone who completes the survey will be eligible for a raffle draw of \$20 to a grocery store of your choice. Three randomly selected winners will be contacted at the beginning of May, 2015. Please be sure to provide your contact information at the end of the survey. NOTE: Your personal information will be kept separately from your survey responses. Informed Consent Here is some important information about participating in the study: Is my participation voluntary? Yes. You are under no obligation to participate, and you may choose to not answer questions or withdraw from participating in this study at any time. Are there any risks? There are no expected physical or psychological risks from participating in this study. The risk of privacy breach in this study is expected to be minimal because we have taken steps to protect your privacy (as described below). There is no direct cost to you for participating in this study. What will I get in return? After completing

this survey, you will be entered in a raffle draw of \$20 to a grocery store of your choosing. What are you doing to protect me? Your privacy is important to us. Any identifying information, such as your address and email, will be given a unique code and stored on a secure electronic file on a password-protected computer in a locked office. All survey data is kept on a secure, password-protected computer at Portland State University, and will be stored separately from identifying data such as your name or address. Any questions? If you have questions about the study itself, send an e-mail to [info@tacHOMEa.org](mailto:info@tacHOMEa.org). Lastly, we would like to acknowledge and thank the City of Portland Bureau of Planning and Sustainability for allowing us to use their photographs in this survey.

I have read and understand the information above, and I would like to participate in this survey.

- ☐ I live in the city of Tacoma
- ☐ I do not live in the city of Tacoma

Answer If I have read and understand the information above, and I would like to participate in this survey. I do not live in the city of Tacoma Is Selected

Where do you live?

City

State (or country)

Answer If I have read and understand the information above, and I would like to participate in this survey. I live in the city of Tacoma Is Selected

To help us better understand the many places of Tacoma, we would like to learn more about your specific neighborhood. The questions below ask about your area of residence.

Answer If I have read and understand the information above, and I would like to participate in this survey. I live in the city of Tacoma Is Selected

This is a map of neighborhood districts provided by the City of Tacoma. Which area do you currently live in?

- ☐ West End
- ☐ North End
- ☐ New Tacoma
- ☐ Northeast Tacoma
- ☐ Central
- ☐ South Tacoma
- ☐ South End
- ☐ Eastside

Answer If I have read and understand the information above, and I would like to participate in this survey. I live in the city of Tacoma Is Selected

Do you have a more specific name for your neighborhood?

☐ No

☐ Yes (if so, what is it?) \_\_\_\_\_

Answer If I have read and understand the information above, and I would like to participate in this survey. I live in the city of Tacoma Is Selected

If you could describe your neighborhood in 3 words, what would they be?

Word 1

Word 2

Word 3

Answer If I have read and understand the information above, and I would like to participate in this survey. I live in the city of Tacoma Is Selected

What are the nearest cross streets to where you live? Example: Near the corner of S 21st St and S Yakima Ave.

Near the corner of \_\_\_\_\_

And \_\_\_\_\_



Answer If I have read and understand the information above, and I would like to participate in this survey. I live in the city of Tacoma Is Selected

How long have you lived at this location?

- ☐ Less than 2 years
- ☐ Longer than 2 years, less than 5 years
- ☐ Longer than 5 years, less than 10 years
- ☐ 10 years or longer

Answer If How long have you lived at this location? Less than 2 years Is Selected

Where did you move from most recently?

- ☐ From another neighborhood in Tacoma (please specify):  
\_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ From another city in Washington (please specify):  
\_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ From out of the state (please specify): Example: Portland, OR  
\_\_\_\_\_

People describe their neighborhoods in different ways. In this section, we want to know about the physical features found in your neighborhood. These can include both the built environment (roads, houses, sidewalks, etc.) and the natural environment (trees, gardens, landscaping, etc.). As you reflect on your neighborhood throughout the remainder of the survey, please think about your neighborhood as the area within several blocks of your home.

To what extent do you agree with the following statements?

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	I don't know
The streets in my neighborhood are in good condition.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The streets in my neighborhood have connected sidewalks.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The streets in my neighborhood have curbs.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The streets in my neighborhood have bicycle lanes.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I feel safe biking down the streets in my neighborhood.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I feel safe walking down the streets in my neighborhood.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I have places to walk to in my neighborhood.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Neighbors tend to utilize alleys for parking their vehicles.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My neighborhood has adequate on-street parking.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My neighborhood has adequate off-street parking (i.e., garage, driveway, etc.).	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
There are trees along the streets in my neighborhood.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
There are trees in private yards in my neighborhood.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The private yards in my neighborhood are well maintained.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I feel there is adequate green space in my neighborhood. "Green space" can mean a park or a natural area.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
There are views of the sound, mountains or other natural features in my neighborhood.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



Answer If How do you agree with the following statements? Each statement begins with "The streets in my neighborhood..." There are trees along the streets near where I live. - Strongly Agree Is Selected Or How do you agree with the following statements? Each statement begins with "The streets in my neighborhood..." There are trees along the streets near where I live. - Agree Is Selected

The trees along the streets are primarily large, mature trees.

- ☐ Strongly agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Neither agree nor disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly Disagree
- ☐ No opinion

Answer If How do you agree with the following statements? There are trees in yards near where I live. - Strongly Agree Is Selected Or How do you agree with the following statements? There are trees in yards near where I live. - Agree Is Selected

The trees in private yards are primarily large, mature trees.

- ☐ Strongly agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Neither agree nor disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly Disagree
- ☐ No opinion

Answer If How do you agree with the following statements? There are views of Mt. Rainier or Puget Sound in my neighborhood. - Strongly Agree Is Selected Or How do you agree with the following statements? There are views of Mt. Rainier or Puget Sound in my neighborhood. - Agree Is Selected

These views are a defining or important characteristic of my neighborhood.

- ☐ Strongly agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Neither agree nor disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly Disagree
- ☐ No opinion

Are there any other physical features not mentioned that are important to the character of your neighborhood?

When walking around your neighborhood, how common are the following housing types?

	Very common	Somewhat common	A few	None	IDK
Single-family, detached homes	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Single-family, attached homes (row houses, townhouses)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Duplexes	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Triplexes or quadplexes	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Multi-family apartments (more than 5 units)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Accessory dwelling units (ADUs) "Tiny homes" or "granny flats"	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

When new housing units are built in existing neighborhoods, it is called residential infill. Residential infill can take place on empty lots, on newly subdivided lots, or when older housing units are replaced with new units. This section will ask you about different residential infill options. Please note there are 33 images shown in this section. The order of these images is randomized. For each numbered image, please indicate the extent to which you think the design of the house would be a positive or negative addition to the character of your neighborhood.

	Do you think the design of the house would be a positive or negative addition to the character of your neighborhood?					
	Very Positive	Somewhat Positive	Neither positive nor negative	Somewhat Negative	Very Negative	I don't know
IMAGE 1	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
IMAGE 2	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
IMAGE 3	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
... 33	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Answer If For each numbered image, please indicate the extent to which you think the design of the house would be a positive or negative addition to the character of your neighborhood. IMAGE 1-33  
- Do you think the design of the house would be a positive or negative addition to the character of your neighborhood? - Very Negative Is Selected

You felt the image above would not be a positive addition to your neighborhood. What features of the unit make you feel that way?

(Mark all that apply.)

- ☐ Size, height, or bulk
- ☐ Relation to other buildings
- ☐ Architectural style (Craftsman, modern, bungalow, etc.)
- ☐ Price (i.e. would have an undesirable impact on neighborhood property values/rents)
- ☐ Density (i.e. would add too many or too few people to the neighborhood)
- ☐ Environmental impact (wasteful use of space and resources, etc.)
- ☐ Other details (please explain): \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ I don't know

How important are the following considerations when doing residential infill development in your neighborhood?

	Very important	Somewhat important	Not important	IDK
A connected network of sidewalks	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Off-street parking (e.g., garage or other options)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Garages that are behind the house	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Building scale (size/height/bulk) that is similar to neighboring homes	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Similar architectural style to neighboring homes	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Windows and front doors that face the street	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Minimizing impacts on neighbors' privacy	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Private outdoor space	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Shared outdoor space (e.g., courtyards)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Environmentally friendly construction	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Low construction cost	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Affordability of the units	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
High-quality construction materials	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Quality of the interior of homes	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Large floor plans that maximize square footage	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other (please describe)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

If you feel strongly about any of the above items, either negatively or positively, please comment.

\_\_\_\_\_



Do you feel that residential infill development is a controversial topic in your neighborhood?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ Somewhat
- ☐ No
- ☐ I don't know

Do you think your neighborhood could accommodate more residents in the future?

- ☐ Yes, many new residents
- ☐ Maybe a few more
- ☐ No, we are at capacity
- ☐ I don't know

Do you wish to share any positive or negative examples of recent residential infill in your area of Tacoma? (Please provide a cross street or numbered block.) Example: A duplex on N 9th St between N Alder St and N Cedar St. It respects the scale and architectural style of the neighborhood.

---

We have a final few demographic questions. These are important to better understand the perspectives certain groups of people have.

How many people live in your household, including yourself? A household is all the people who occupy your housing unit. It can include people not related to you.

- ☐ 1
- ☐ 2
- ☐ 3
- ☐ 4
- ☐ 5
- ☐ 6
- ☐ 7 or more

Are there one or more children under the age of 18 in your household?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Answer If Are there children under the age of 16 in your household?  
Yes Is Selected

Are there one or more children aged 5 years or younger in your household?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Are there one or more adults aged 60 years or older in your household?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

How old are you?

---

Do you rent or own your current home?

- ☐ Rent
- ☐ Own

Do you rely on public transportation to get around the city?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Sometimes

Which gender do you identify with most?

- ☐ Male
- ☐ Female
- ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Do you identify as Hispanic, Latino/Latina or of Spanish origin?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Which race category do you identify with?

- ☐ White or Caucasian A person having origins in any of the original peoples of Europe, the Middle East, or North Africa.
- ☐ Black or African American A person having origins in any of the Black racial groups of Africa.
- ☐ Asian or Asian-American A person having origins in any of the original peoples of the Far East, Southeast Asia, or the Indian subcontinent including, for example, Cambodia, China, India, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Pakistan, the Philippine Islands, Thailand, and Vietnam.

- ☐ American Indian or Alaska Native A person having origins in any of the original peoples of North and South America (including Central America) and who maintains tribal affiliation or community attachment.
- ☐ Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander A person having origins in any of the original peoples of Hawaii, Guam, Samoa, or other Pacific Islands.
- ☐ Other (please specify): \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ Two or more races A person having origins from two or more race categories.

What is the combined annual income of all the people in your household?

- ☐ Less than \$10,000
- ☐ \$10,000 to \$14,999
- ☐ \$15,000 to \$24,999
- ☐ \$25,000 to \$34,999
- ☐ \$35,000 to \$49,999
- ☐ \$50,000 to \$74,999
- ☐ \$75,000 to \$99,999
- ☐ \$100,000 or more

Is there anything else you would like to tell us?

\_\_\_\_\_

Thank you for completing the survey! By clicking the button below, you will submit your survey and be redirected to a short form to be entered into a raffle prize drawing. Please continue to the next screen.

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# **APPENDIX E: PROJECT WORK PLAN**



# WORK PLAN

City of Tacoma Planning and  
Development Services and Portland State  
University Planning Workshop Group

February 24th, 2015  
Effective from February 15th  
to June 10th, 2015

## INTRODUCTION

The City of Tacoma is located within the Puget Sound region, which was home to nearly 3.6 million people in 2007 and is continuing to grow. The area's high quality of life and employment opportunities are attracting a young and well-educated labor force, which is contributing to considerable increases in population. As outlined in the region's growth strategy, local jurisdictions are required to plan to accommodate an allocation of future regional population growth. The City of Tacoma must plan for 127,000 additional residents by 2040. This growth will place considerable demands on the city's existing infrastructure and land supply.

## PROJECT CONTEXT

The City of Tacoma amends its Comprehensive Plan on an annual basis as permitted by state law. In addition to these regular amendments, the

Growth Management Act (GMA) requires counties and cities to conduct periodic reviews to align their plans with any GMA changes and updated growth targets. The City of Tacoma last completed a periodic update in 2004 and is scheduled to complete its current periodic review by the end of June 2015. In addition to complying with any changes in regional and state requirements, the focus of this update is to extend the planning horizon to 2040 and implement policy directions and recommendations from current and previous studies to accommodate the growth allocations for the city as adopted in Vision 2040.

A central tenet of the city's Comprehensive Plan is to accommodate growth within connected, concentrated and compact neighborhoods served by multimodal transportation options. While Tacoma's zoning code allows for high densities and mixed-use development in designated neighborhood centers, the city also has policies that encourage preservation of single-family neighborhood character. As compared to Seattle's even split between single-family and multi-family housing, Tacoma's current housing makeup consists of approximately 65% single-family housing. To accommodate projected growth, the city has established a housing target of 47,000 additional units by 2035, which has been

adopted by county-wide planning policies. Because Tacoma is highly built out, it is expected that the city's ability to meet the housing target will rely upon multi-family infill development and some additional density in single-family neighborhoods.

## PROBLEM STATEMENT AND PURPOSE

The City of Tacoma has policies that both encourage the densification of neighborhoods through a broadened range of residential infill options, and protect the character of single-family housing patterns. However, recent residential development has illustrated the difficulty of achieving both goals simultaneously in a compatible manner. The purpose of this project is to develop a toolkit of strategies that promote medium-density residential infill that is sensitive to neighborhood patterns. Some of these final project recommendations may guide revisions to relevant sections of Tacoma's Comprehensive Plan.

## PROJECT SCOPE

This planning effort seeks to identify strategies for expanding housing options through medium-density residential infill that best fits the patterns of Tacoma's residential neighborhoods. The Planning Group will: summarize existing conditions, identify residential

neighborhood patterns, generate design principles and compatibility priorities that reflect community input, and put forth recommended strategies for expanding housing options that are sensitive to Tacoma's residential character.

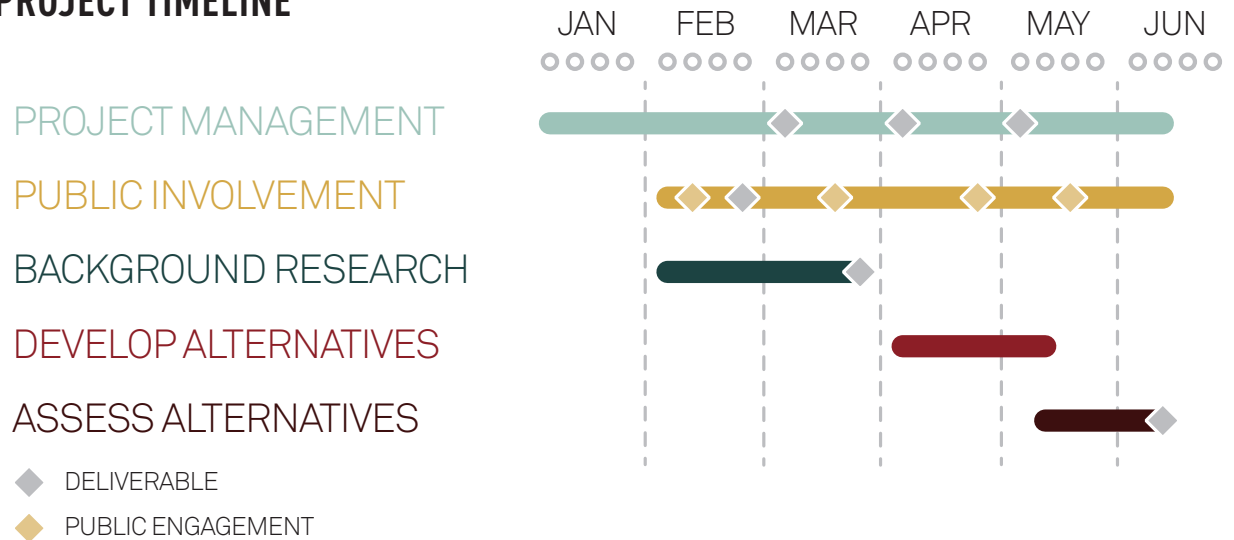
## DELIVERABLES

The following products will build upon each other and culminate in a final report aimed to help guide revisions to relevant sections of Tacoma's Comprehensive Plan Update:

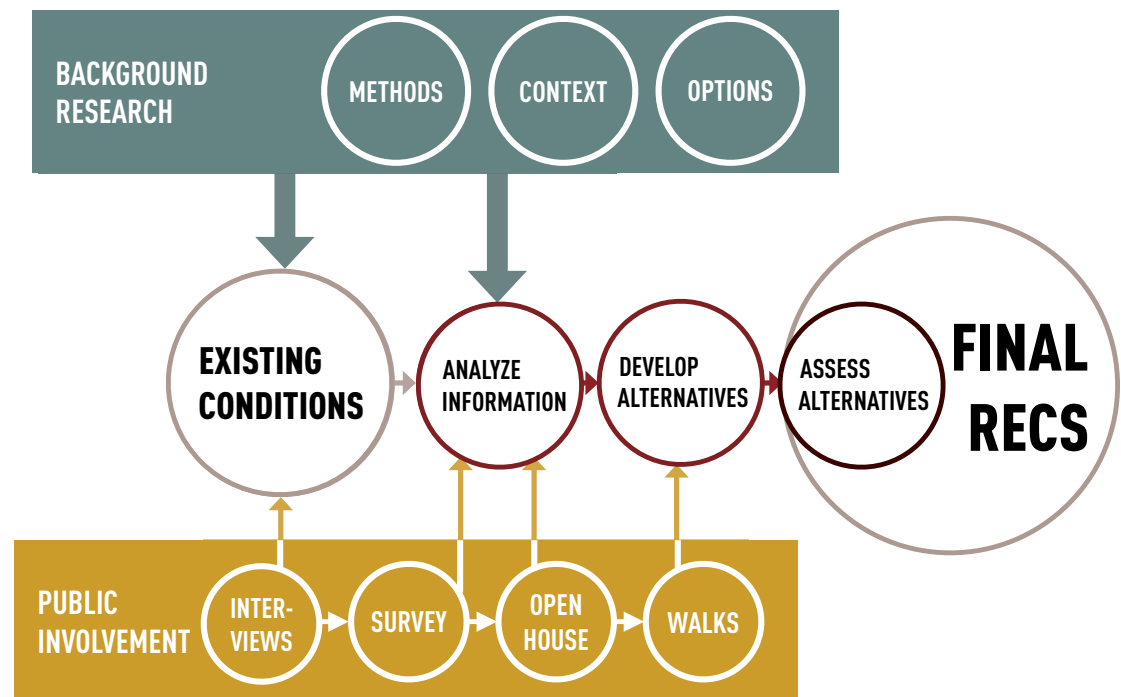
### DELIVERABLES & EXPECTED DATES OF COMPLETION

- » Community Engagement Strategy, February 2015
- » Existing Conditions and Residential Area Patterns Report, March 2015
- » Community Engagement Report, May 2015
- » Final Report, June 2015

## PROJECT TIMELINE



## CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK



## **PROJECT COMPONENTS: ONGOING PROJECT MANAGEMENT**

Throughout the duration of project, coordinate communications, manage the scope of work and track progress.

- » Manage communication;
  - » Facilitate bi-weekly tele-conference meetings.
  - » Submit monthly progress reports by the first Friday of the month;
- » Logistics;
  - » Manage file sharing and logo use.
- » Track budget;
  - » Collect receipts and submit invoices.
- » Update and revise schedule;
  - » Monitor, assess and adjust work plan as needed.

## **PROJECT COMPONENTS, PHASE 1: INFORMATION GATHERING BACKGROUND RESEARCH**

Compile and review relevant literature, planning documents and available data.

- » Research Tacoma planning context:
  - » Residential development history;
  - » Regulatory and nonregulatory framework for residential infill development;
- » Identify case studies of residential infill development projects in Tacoma;
- » Identify methodology and 3-5 metrics for determining residential area patterns.

## **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT 1**

Conduct preliminary, focused outreach to help inform background research and existing conditions.

- » Identify citywide stakeholders, such as developers, planners and permit bureau personnel;
- » Conduct up to (3) informational interviews with stakeholders;
- » Deliverables:
  - » Produce an Existing Conditions Report that summarizes development history and planning context, and identifies neighborhood patterns. Components include:
    - » Tacoma History and Planning Context;
    - » Residential Area Patterns;
    - » Community Engagement Strategy: Building upon preliminary, focused interviews, produce a document that outlines a strategy for engaging the broader public in Phase II.

## **PROJECT COMPONENTS, PHASE 2: INFORMATION ANALYSIS**

### **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT II**

Implement the community engagement strategy, soliciting input from the community to identify issues and preferences for residential infill development.

- » Identify community stakeholders;
- » Identify key questions for public input;

- » Develop and execute two engagement activities:
  - » Launch an online poll and paper survey;
  - » Conduct a walking tour with a focus group.

## **ANALYSIS OF INFORMATION**

Analyze information gathered to identify strategies for integrating and promoting compatible residential infill development.

- » Analyze information gathered through community engagement activities;
- » Synthesize public involvement information with background research and data analysis.
- » Generate strategies that reflect the opportunities and constraints of Tacoma's residential patterns;
- » Identify changes to the code or policy updates that would help implement these strategies.
- » Deliverables:
  - » Community Engagement Report which summarizes community outreach efforts and analyzes public input.

## **PROJECT COMPONENTS, PHASE III: INFORMATION ASSESSMENT DEVELOPMENT OF ALTERNATIVES**

Develop different approaches that reflect the opportunities and constraints faced by stakeholders involved in promoting or

implementing compatible residential infill development, based on the values and preferences identified by the community.

- » Generate strategies and tools such as design principles, market incentives and policies for developers and planners;
- » Identify code or policy changes for the Comprehensive Plan Update help implement these strategies.

### **FINAL REPORT**

Produce a report that serves as a resource for those involved in designing, building, planning or participating in dialogue about Tacoma's new residential infill development. This report will present recommendations for promoting and implementing context-sensitive residential infill development.





